Vol. 9

ROKUDA NOBORU

F
VOL.9

F
PHOENIX
GUNMA
80
Vol.9
KEEP ON DRIVING

F

Vol.9
KEEP ON DRIVING

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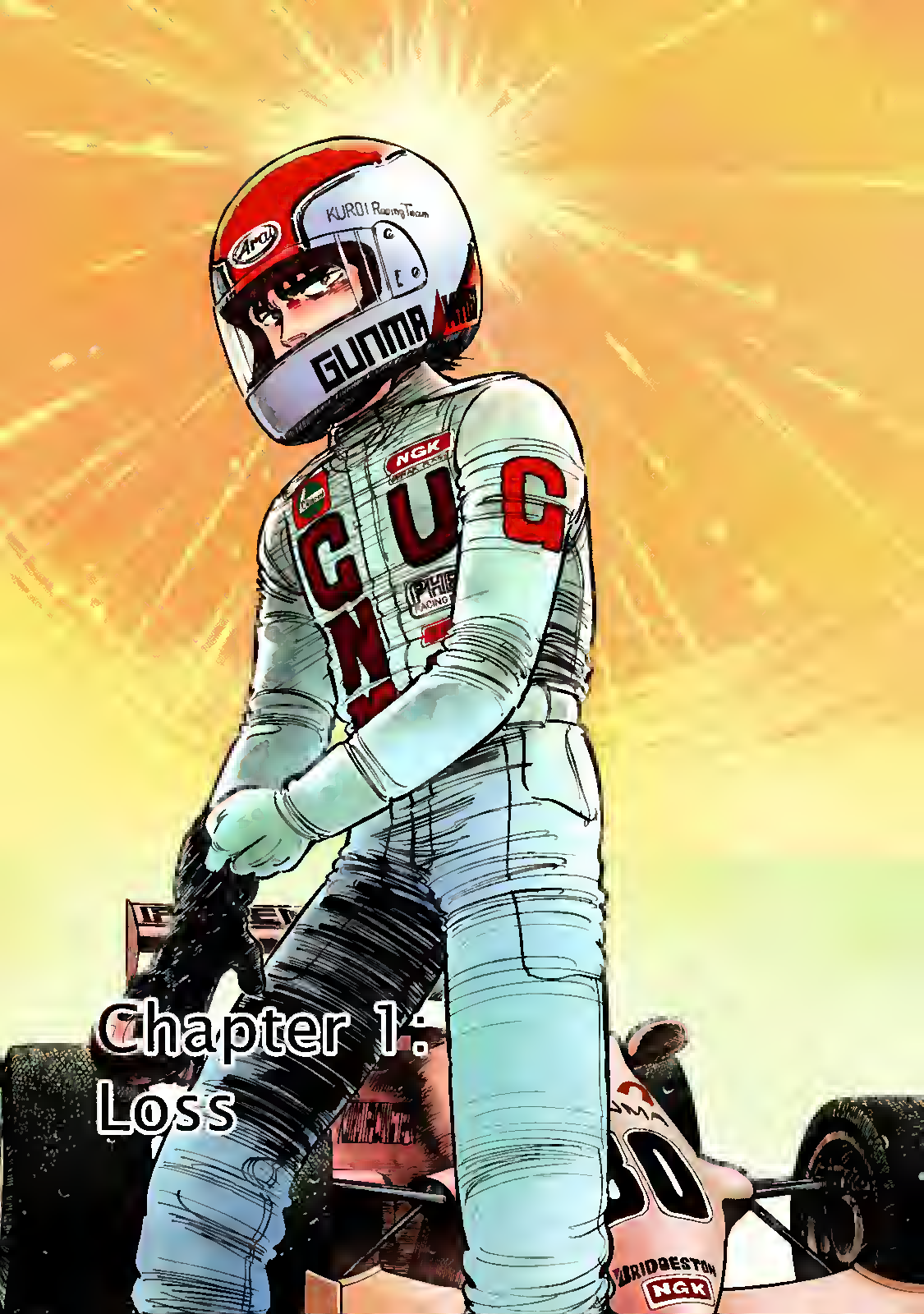
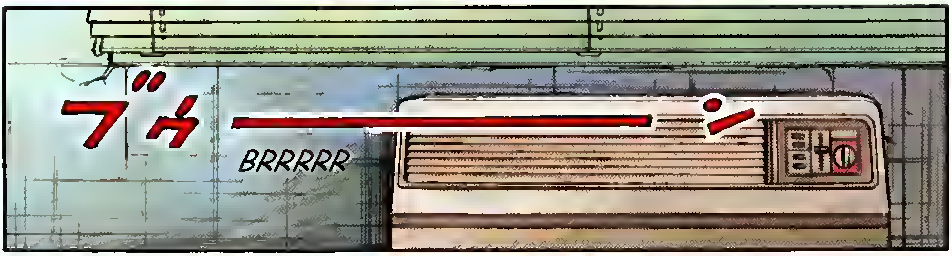
Chapter 7: Stolen Victory
Chapter 8: Revived Passion
Chapter 9: Time Moves On
Chapter 10: Amplitude
Chapter 11: Resonance
Chapter 12: Mobius Strip

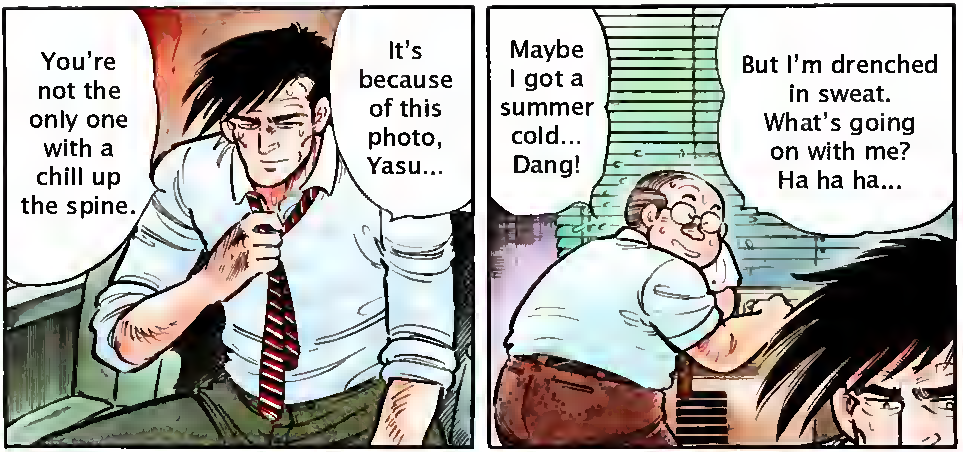


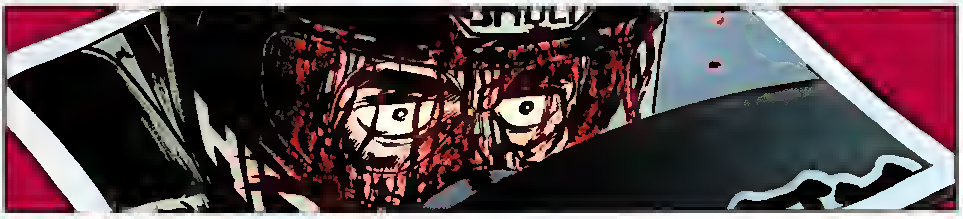
Chapter 1: Loss

みーん
CHEEP
みーん
CHEEP
CHEEP
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP


ブゥ
BRRRRR

My back feels chilly... Is the air conditioner cranked all the way up or what?


You're not the only one with a chill up the spine.
It's because of this photo, Yasu...
Maybe I got a summer cold... Dang!
But I'm drenched in sweat. What's going on with me? Ha ha ha...



So how did Gunma react?
スゥ PUFF
スゥ PUFF
But... it wasn't a good idea to show this to Gunma.

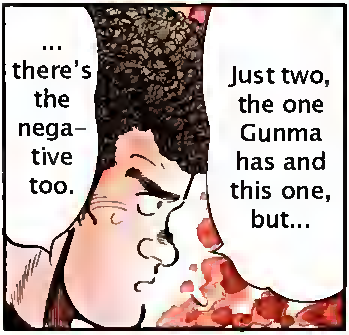
...he ...
Uh... well...

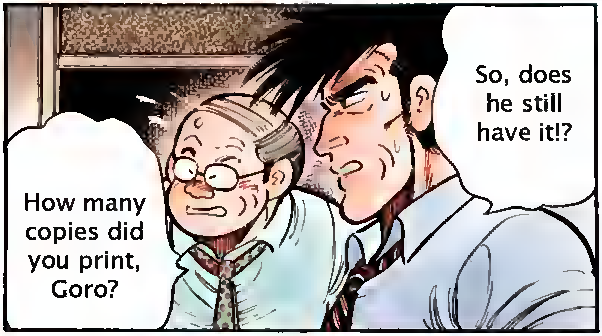
...
Well, it is a hell of a photo...
ドス・・
THWUMP

I'll be keeping this photo, Goro...

He stared for 5 or 10 minutes like he was going to burn a hole in it, then...

Gu... Gunma ...

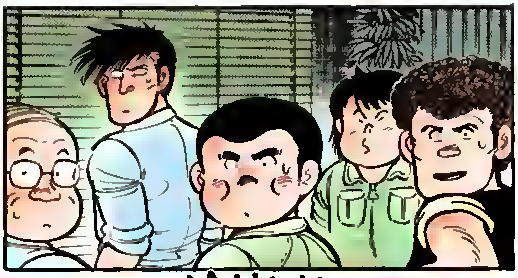

... there's the nega-tive too.
Just two, the one Gunma has and this one, but...

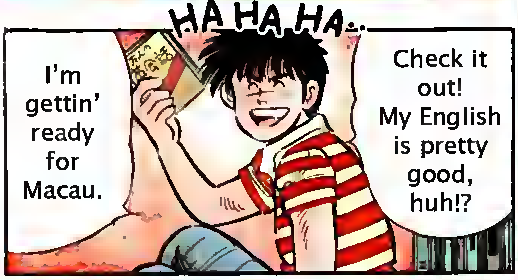

How many copies did you print, Goro?
So, does he still have it!?

Hijiri would want the same thing...

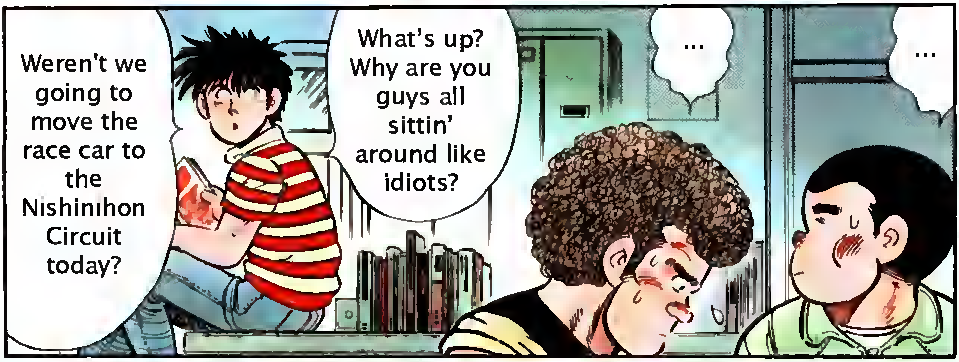
Burn it right away! The negative too!

All in smiles!?
But that also seemed kind of disrespectful to Hijiri... Since Gunma won six races in a row all in smiles, I figured I'd give it to him and he could burn it or do whatever he wanted with it...
I guess ...that might have been a better idea...
!?
What have you been watching, Goro!?
CLACK
Huh...!? But, what? He...
...he could crash and die at any time!
He's far from happy, the way Gunma is now...
Good morning! Every-body!



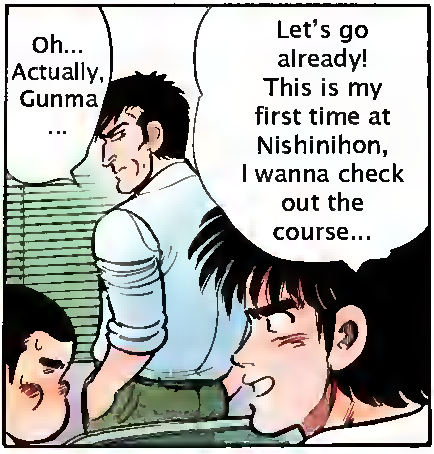

HA HA HA..
I'm gettin' ready for Macau.
Check it out! My English is pretty good, huh!?

I'm fine thank you thank you!
Just a nice day!
SUTT


Weren't we going to move the race car to the Nishinihon Circuit today?
What's up? Why are you guys all sittin' around like idiots?
...
...

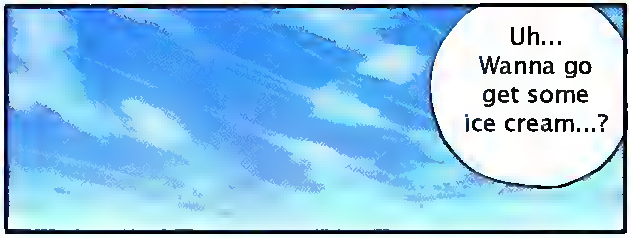
...

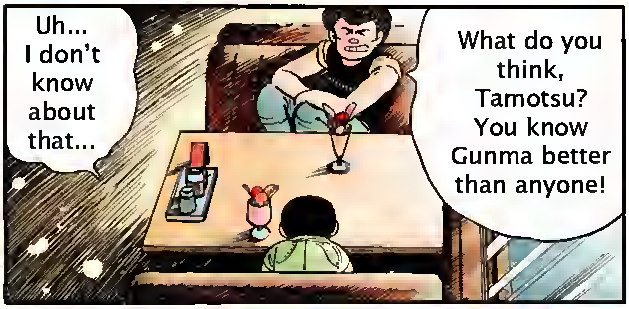
I've withdrawn your entry for Round 7...

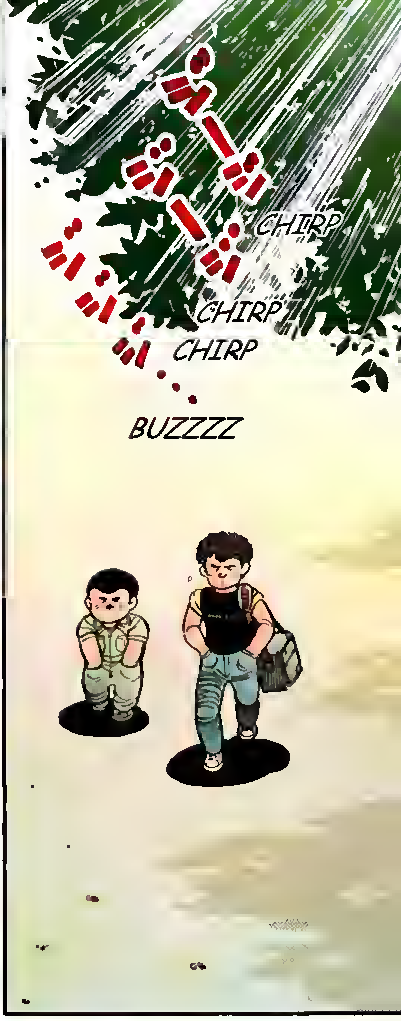

Oh... Actually, Gunma ...
Let's go already! This is my first time at Nishinihon, I wanna check out the course...

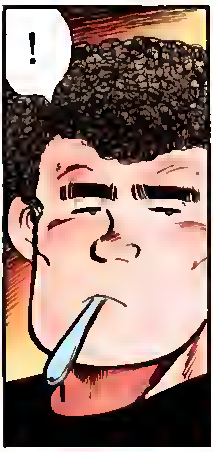
...
It's probably time for you to take a break... Besides, Nishinihon is pretty far.
Wh– What did you do with it?
Uh... Gunma, about that photo yesterday...
Maybe I'll go play some pachinko.
Fine, then! I'm out. Later.
SPIN
I tossed it...
That thing ...?
KACHUK
Tossed it...!?
...

I don't know what Mr. Kuroi is talking about!
What the hell...? He's been totally dominating for six races!

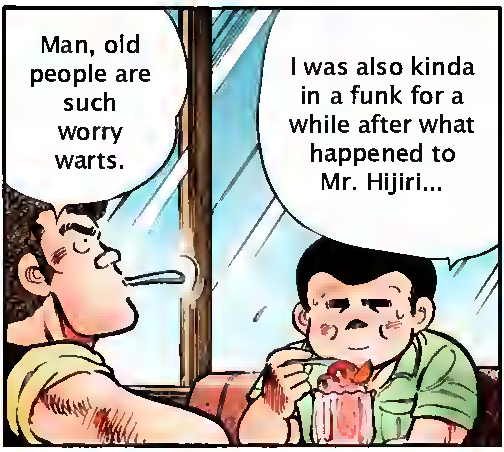

Uh... Wanna go get some ice cream...?

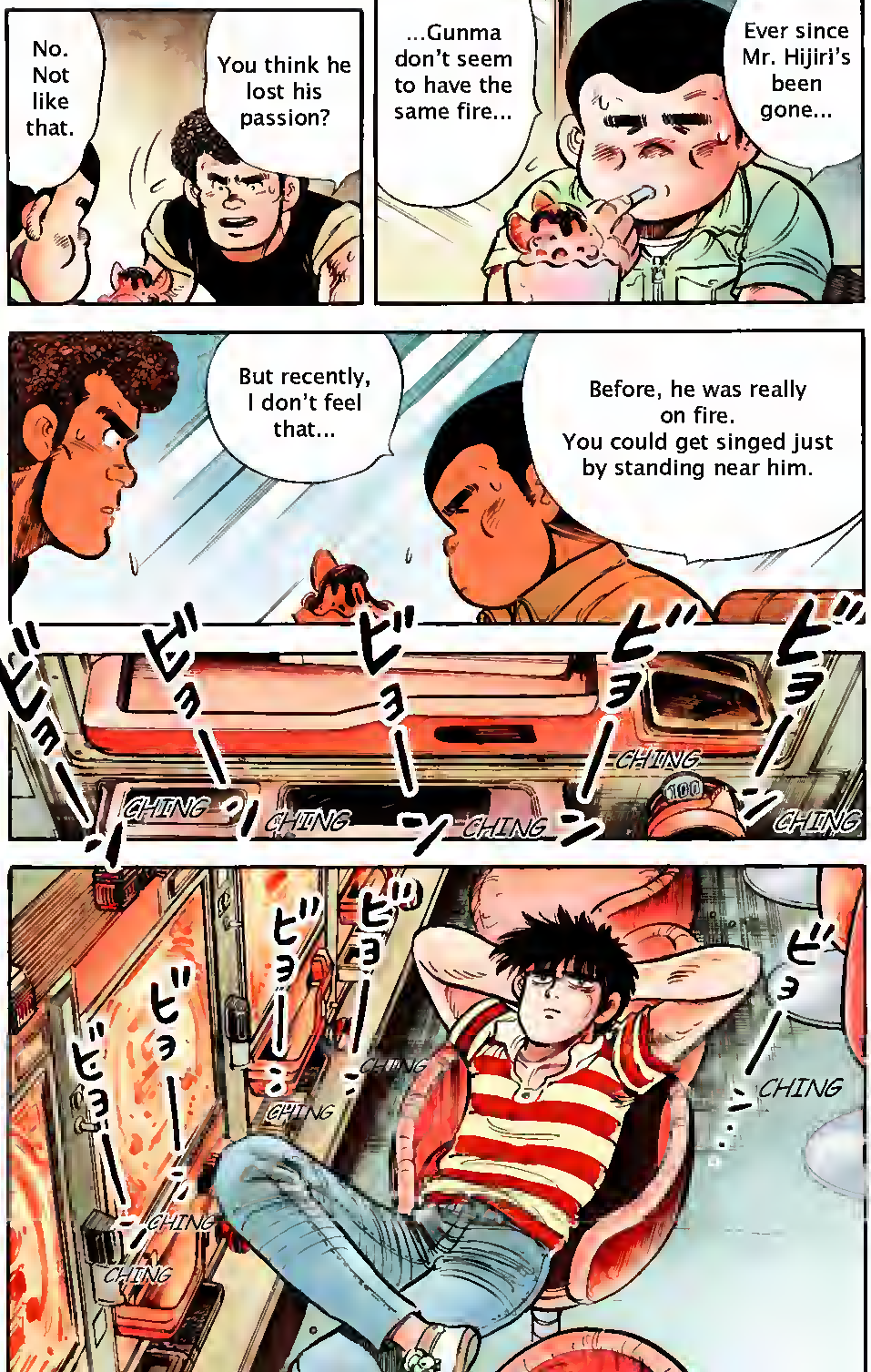

Uh... I don't know about that...
What do you think, Tamotsu? You know Gunma better than anyone!

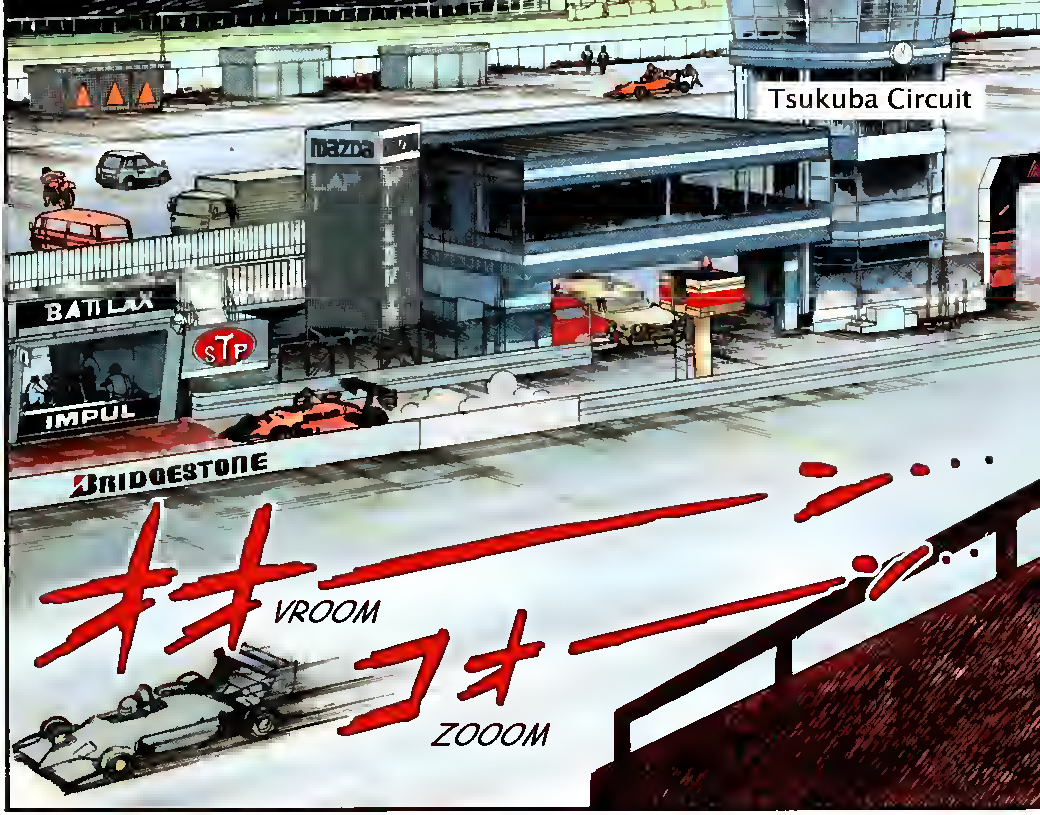

CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
BUZZZZ

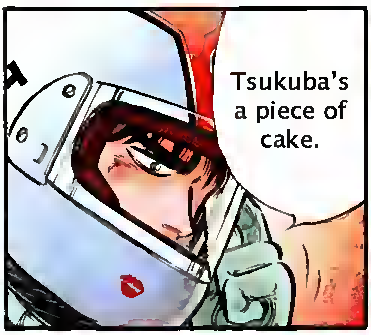

!

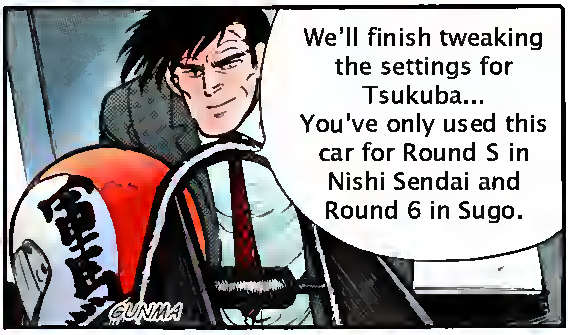
But...
STIR
STIR

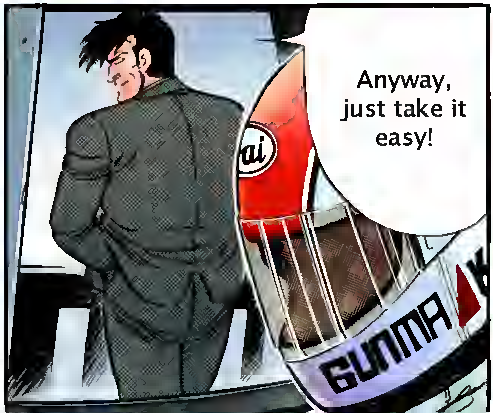

Man, old people are such worry warts.
I was also kinda in a funk for a while after what happened to Mr. Hijiri...


No. Not like that.
You think he lost his passion?
...Gunma don't seem to have the same fire...
Ever since Mr. Hijiri's been gone...
But recently, I don't feel that...
Before, he was really on fire. You could get singed just by standing near him.
ビュー
CHING
100


Tsukuba Circuit
mazda
BATTLAX
STP
IMPUL
BRIDGESTONE
オオ
VROOM
コオ
ZOOOM

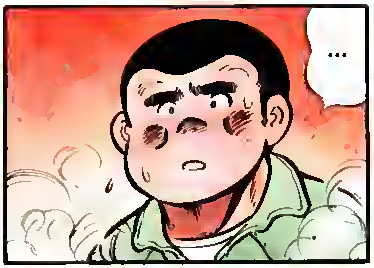

Tsukuba's a piece of cake.


We'll finish tweaking the settings for Tsukuba...
You've only used this car for Round S in Nishi Sendai and Round 6 in Sugo.
GUNMA

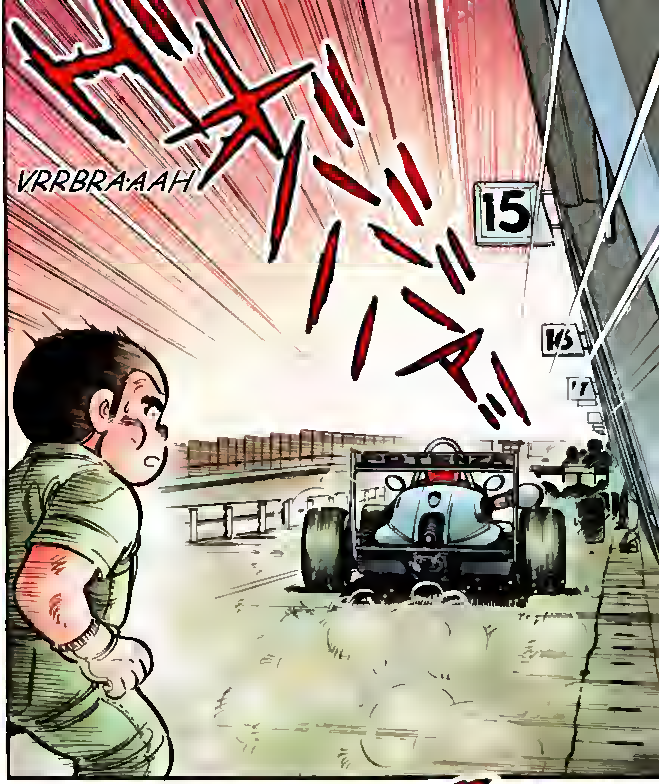

Anyway, just take it easy!
GUNMA

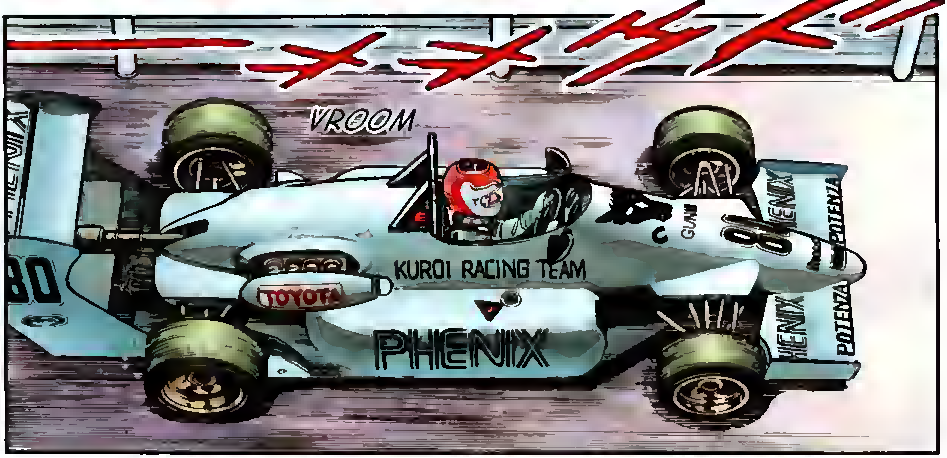
Show that confidence with your eyes, not your mouth.

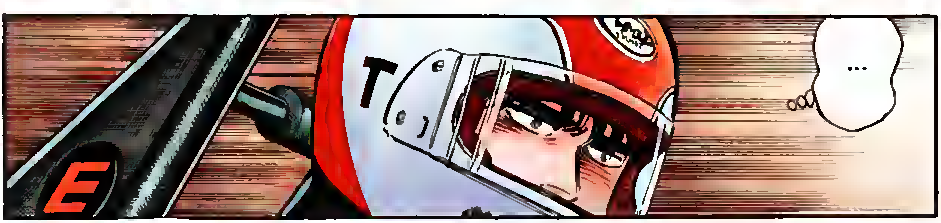
Did you really throw out that photo of Mr. Hijiri...?
H-Hey, Gunma, I want to ask one more time...
Right, Tamotsu?
Hmph. How can I get a feel for the settings takin' it easy!?
KURO
ING
VRRRRRRR
!!
KUROI RACING TEAM
PHENIX
...it already!
What!?
...it!
GUNMA
BRRBRRRVRRR


...

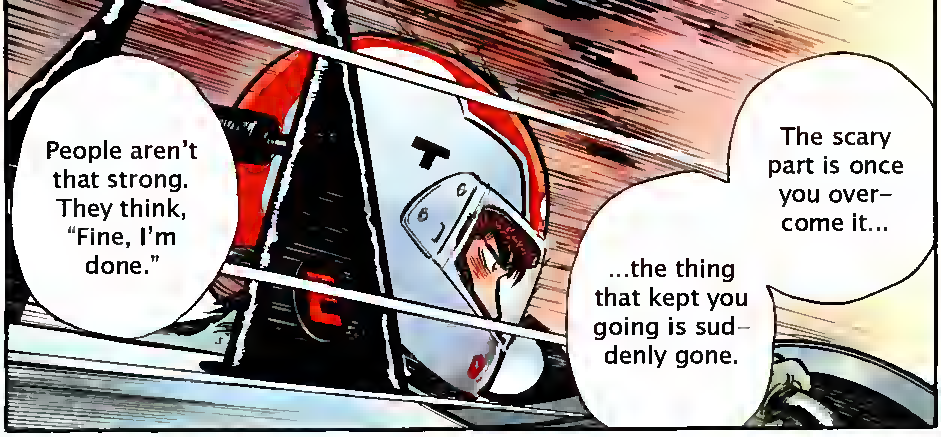
That fool. His eyes are still lifeless...
!?

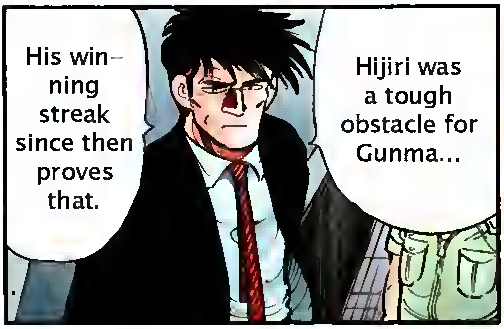

VRRBRA:AAH
15

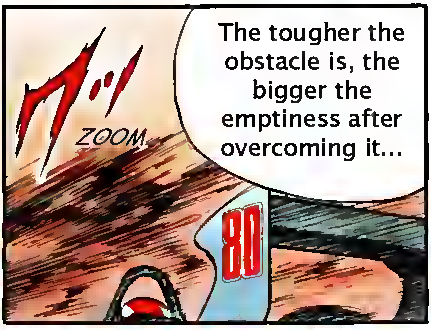

VROOM
KUROI RACING TEAM
TOYOTA
PHENIX
POTENZA
80


...

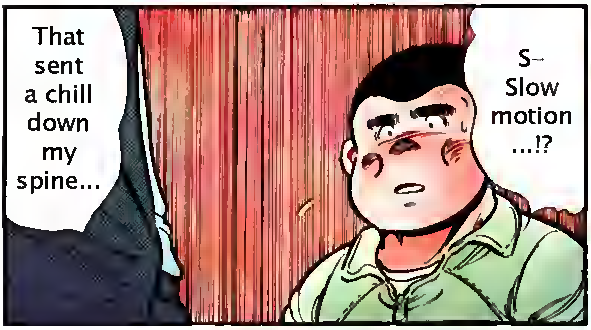
...to just end it all.
Sometimes, people get this sudden urge...
N-No, I don't think that, but...
You think I'm worrying too much about Gunma?
Mr. Kuroi ...
The problem is that he's surpassed Hijiri...
Not because Hijiri died.
VRRVRR
It's fine as long as there's an obstacle right in front of you.
You do everything you can to overcome that obstacle...
!
...


People aren't that strong. They think, "Fine, I'm done."
The scary part is once you over-come it...
...the thing that kept you going is sud-denly gone.

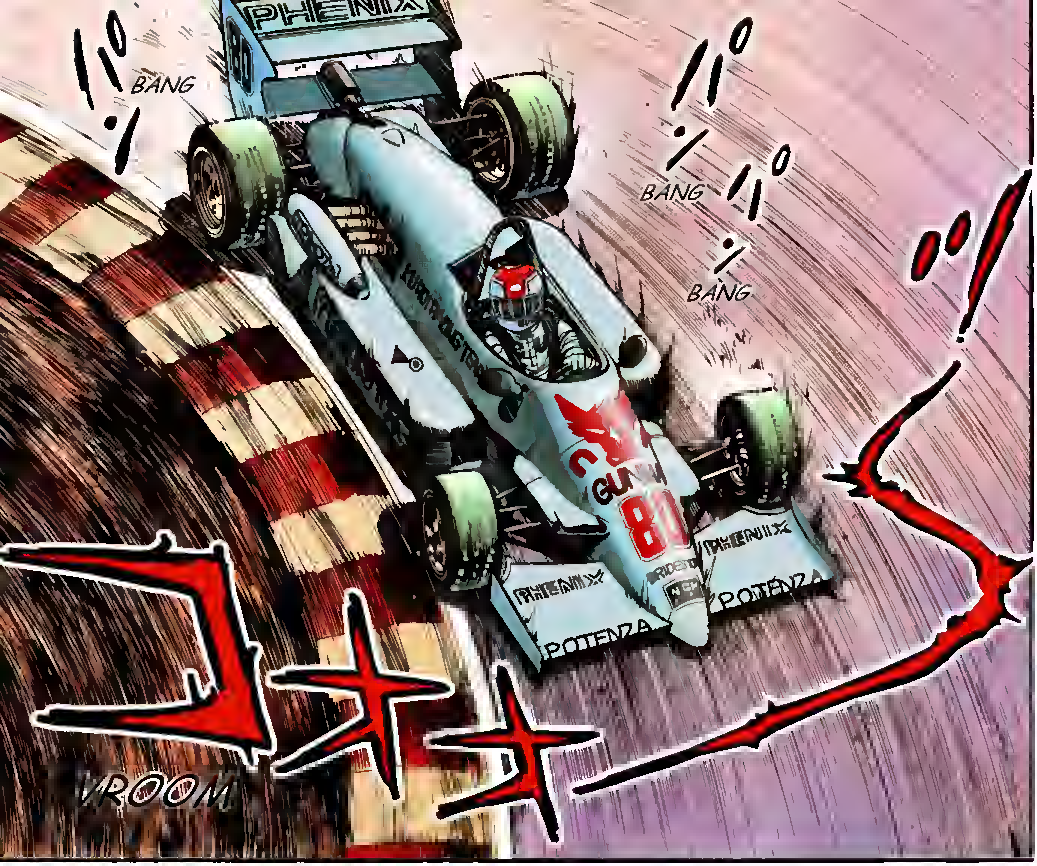

His win-ning streak since then proves that.
Hijiri was a tough obstacle for Gunma...

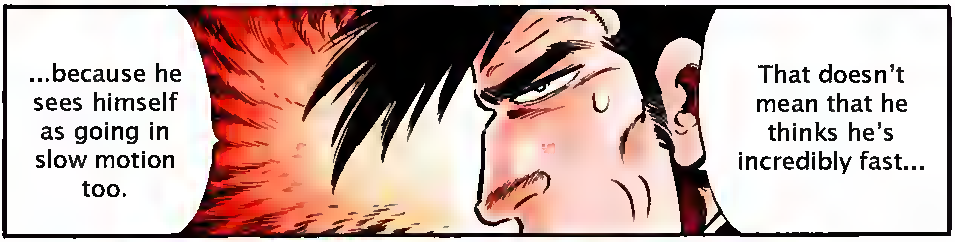

ZOOM
The tougher the obstacle is, the bigger the emptiness after overcoming it...

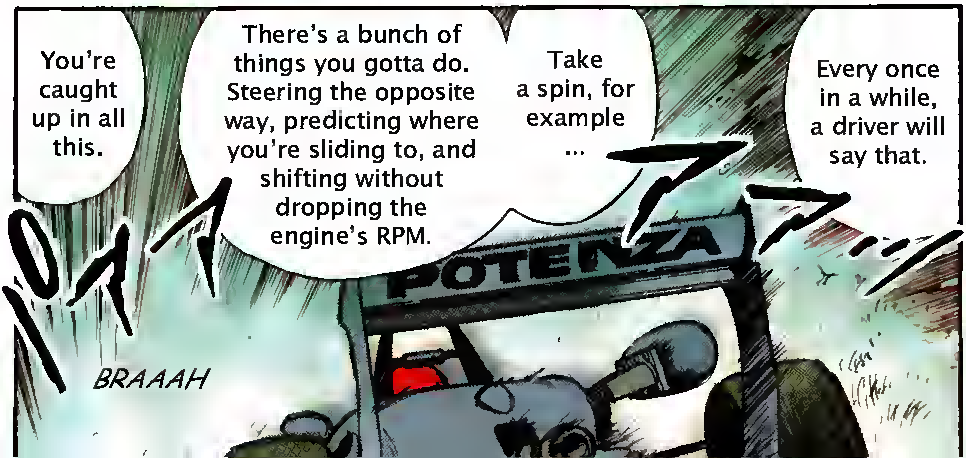
Heh ...
"Hey, Kuroi... It looks like everyone's racing in slow motion, in-cluding me."

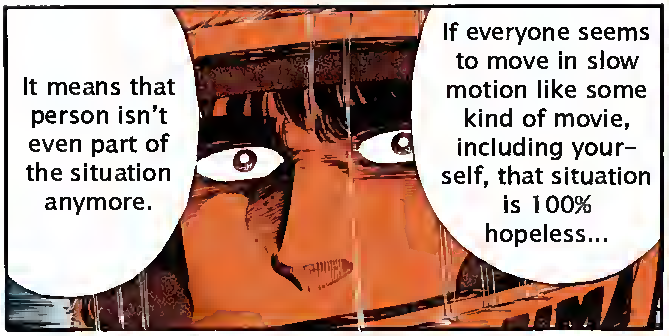

That sent a chill down my spine...
S-Slow motion ...!?

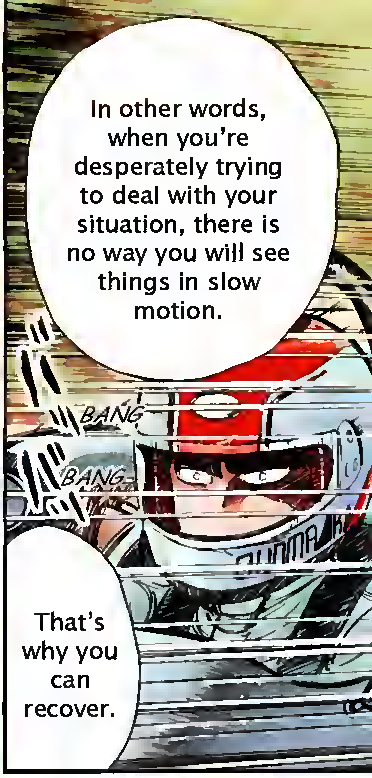
...that bas-tard said something to me...
After he said his "Nobody gets in front of me" line in the inter-view for his sixth win...
You know what he said?

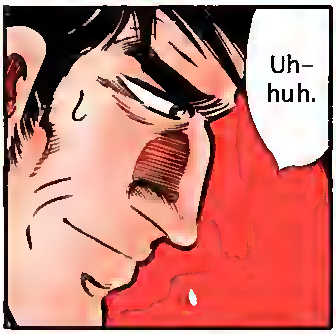

BANG
BANG
BANG
PHENIX
POTENZA
VROOM

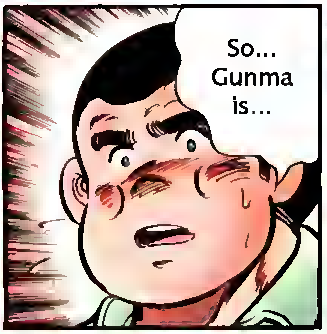

...because he sees himself as going in slow motion too.
That doesn't mean that he thinks he's incredibly fast...

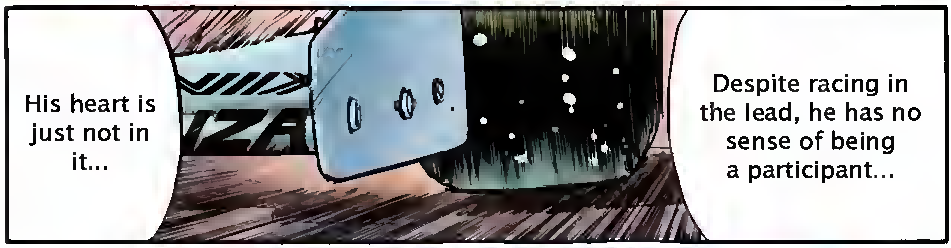

You're caught up in all this.
There's a bunch of things you gotta do. Steering the opposite way, predicting where you're sliding to, and shifting without dropping the engine's RPM.
Take a spin, for example ...
Every once in a while, a driver will say that.
BRAAAH
POTENZA

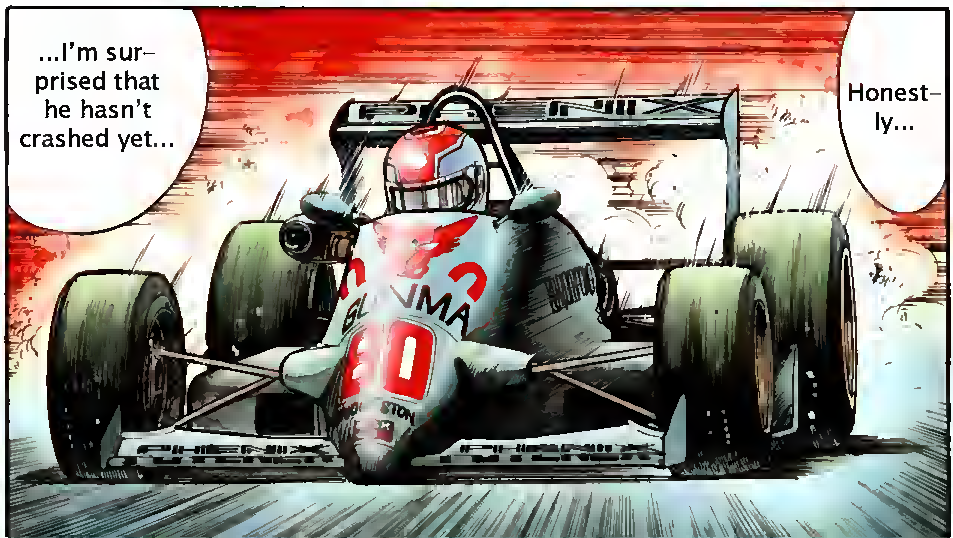

It means that person isn't even part of the situation anymore.
If everyone seems to move in slow motion like some kind of movie, including yourself, that situation is 100% hopeless...

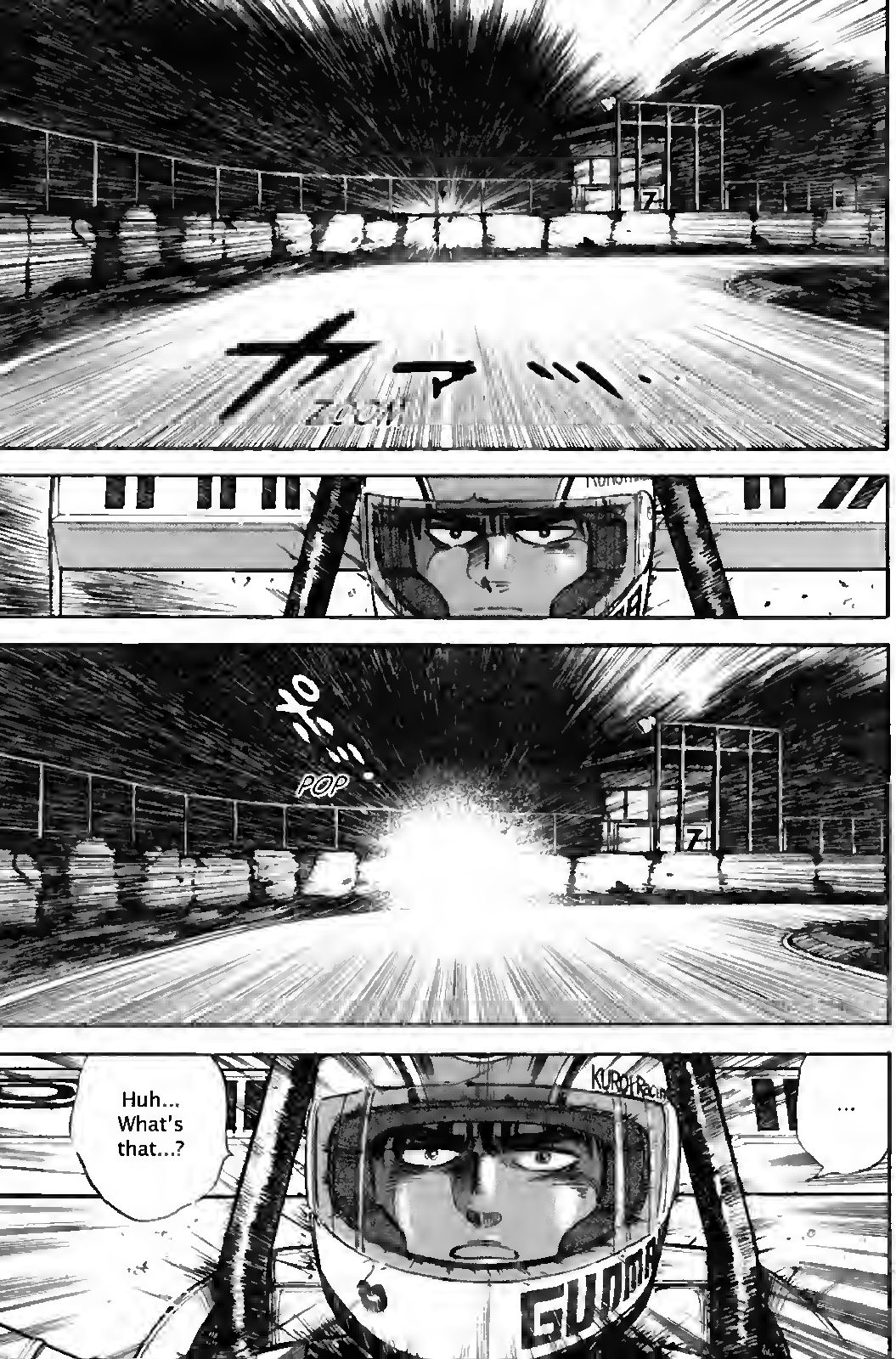

In other words, when you're desperately trying to deal with your situation, there is no way you will see things in slow motion.
BANG
BANG
That's why you can recover.


Uh-huh.

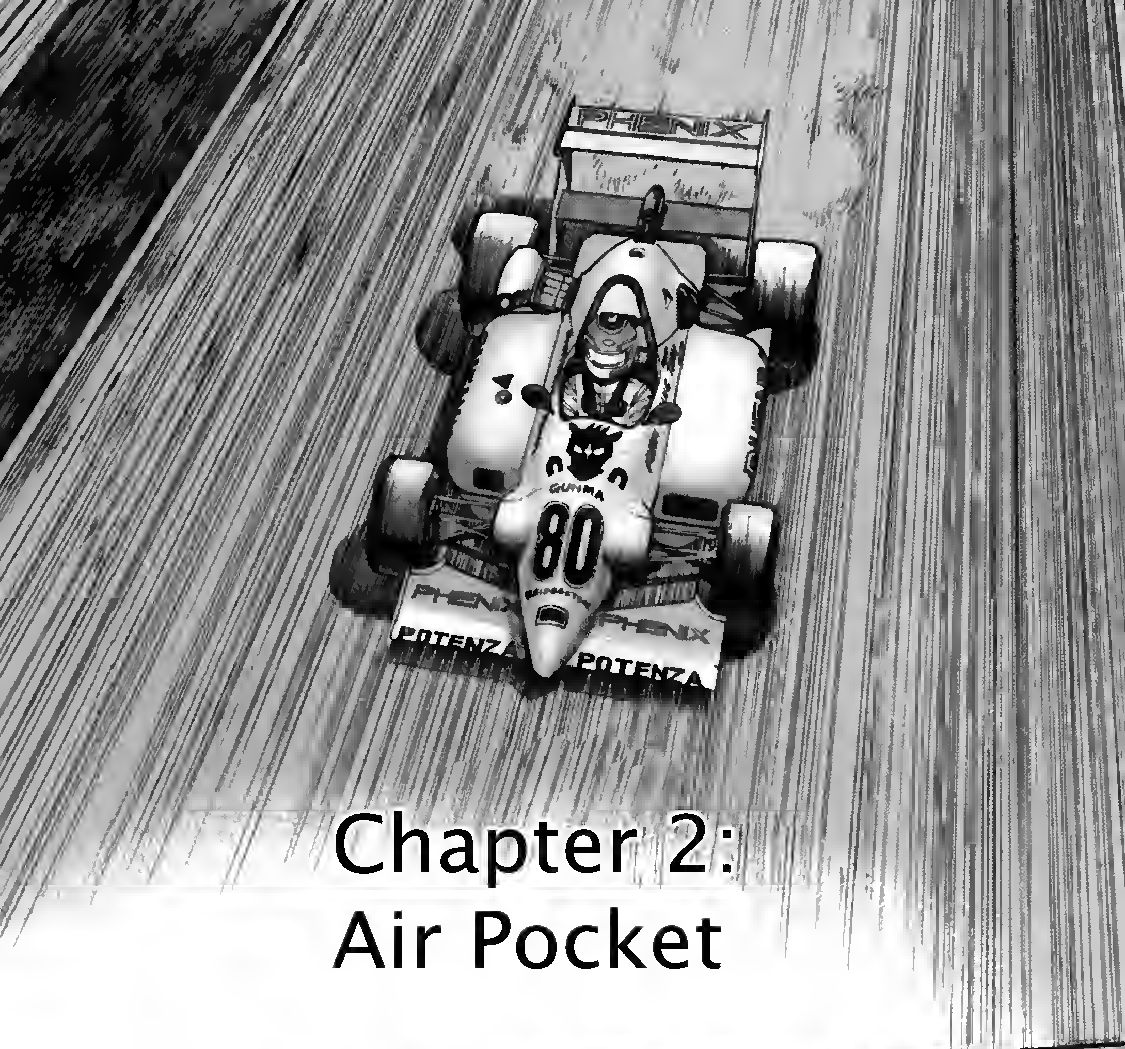

So... Gunma is...


His heart is just not in it...
Despite racing in the lead, he has no sense of being a participant...

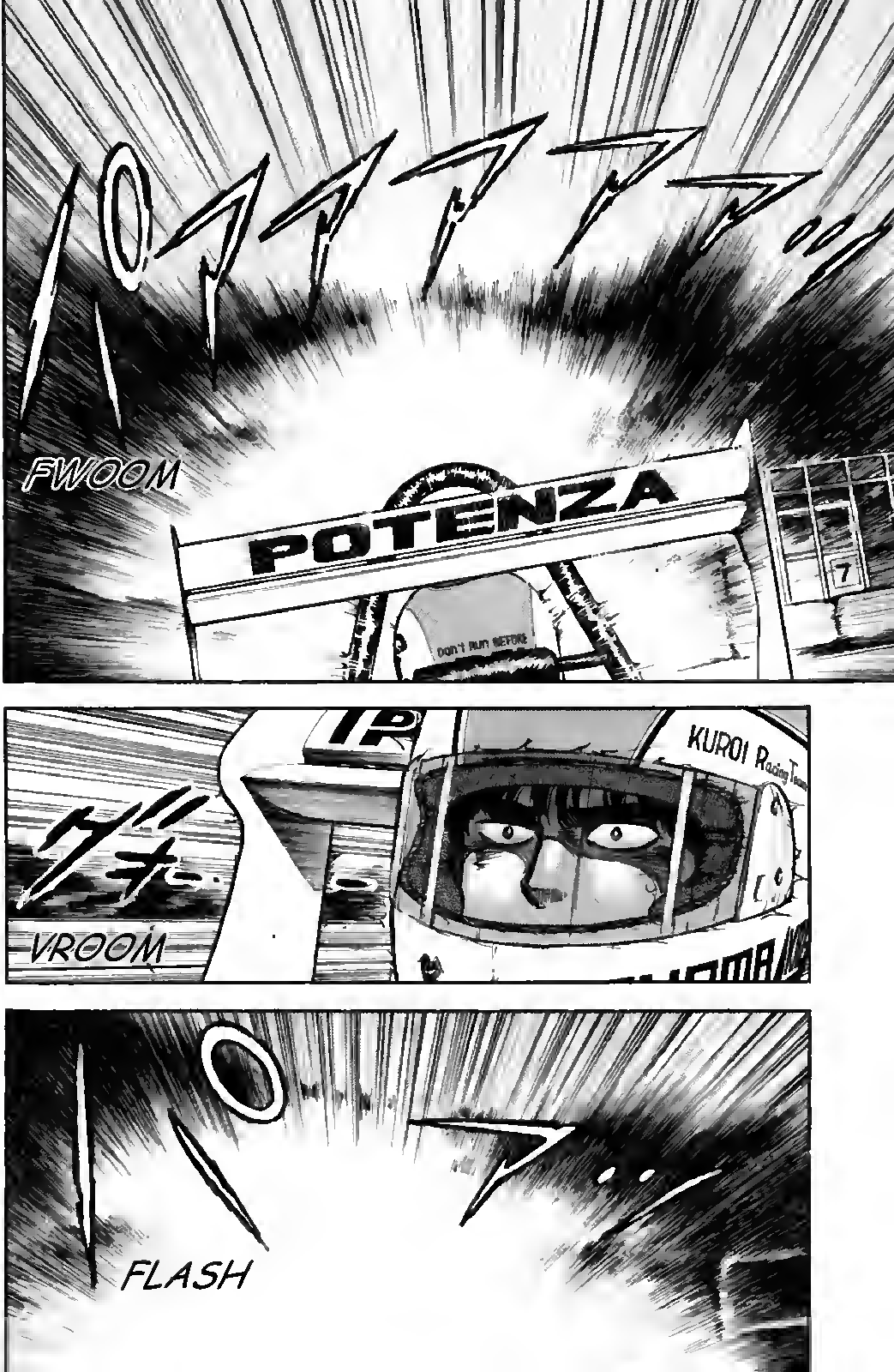

...I'm surprised that he hasn't crashed yet...
Honestly...
GUNMA
80

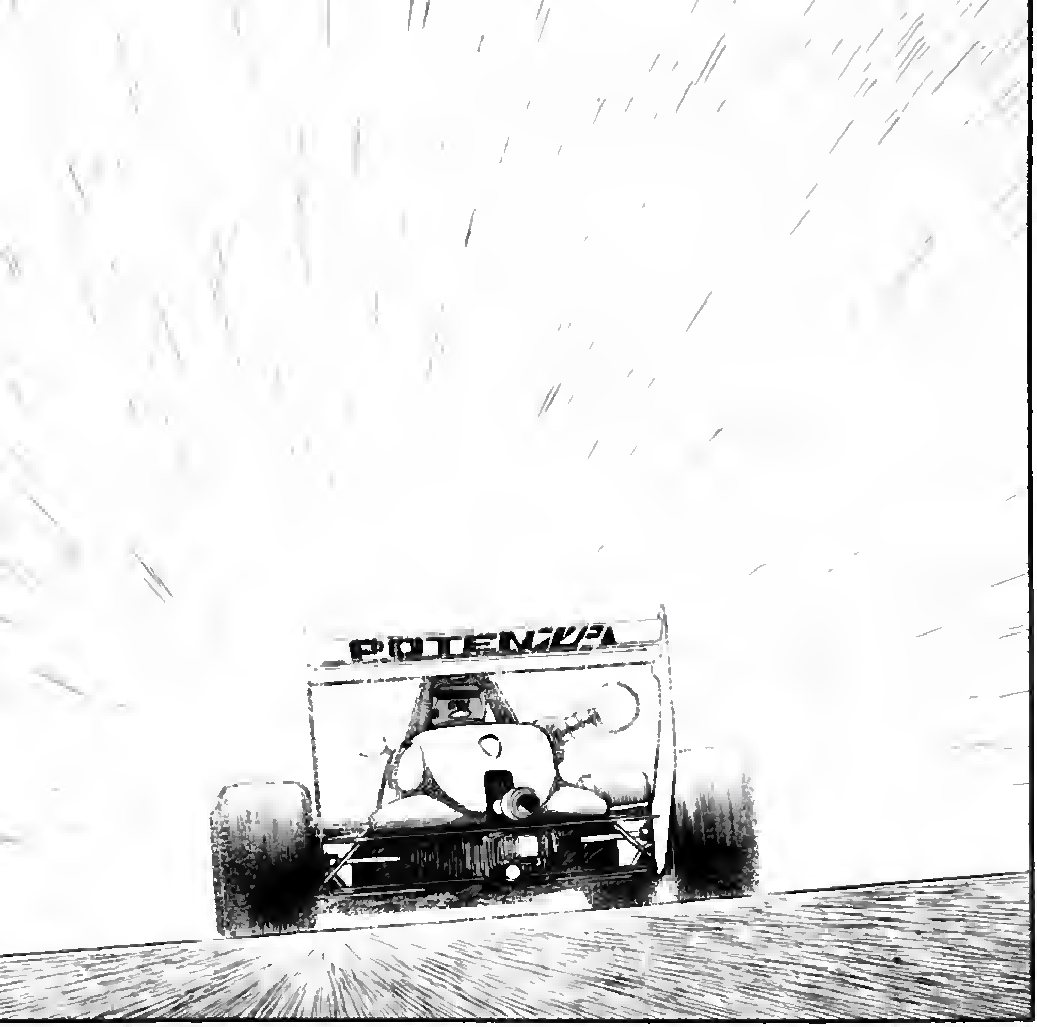

ZOOM
POP
Huh... What's that...?
...

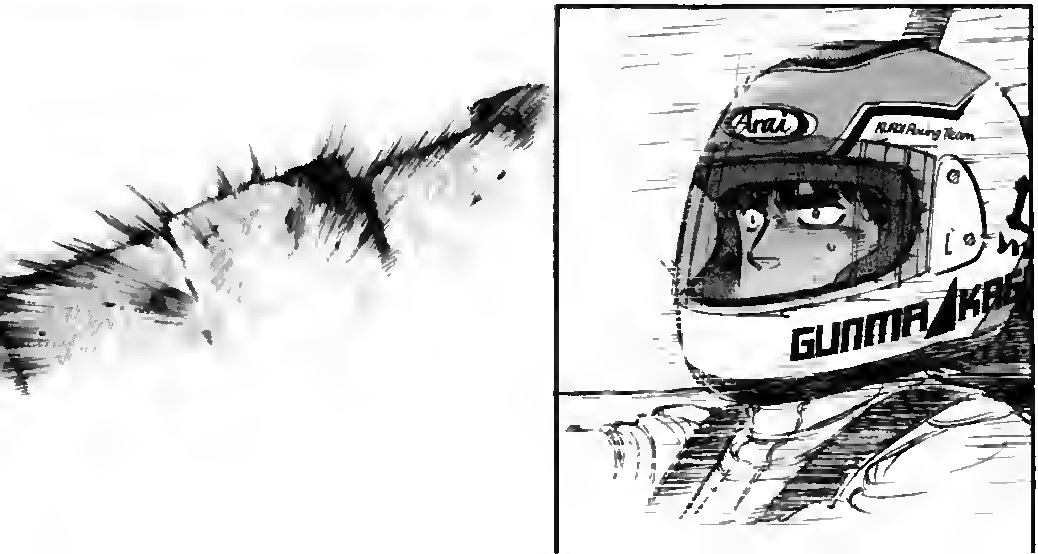
POP
VRRRRR



Chapter 2: Air Pocket

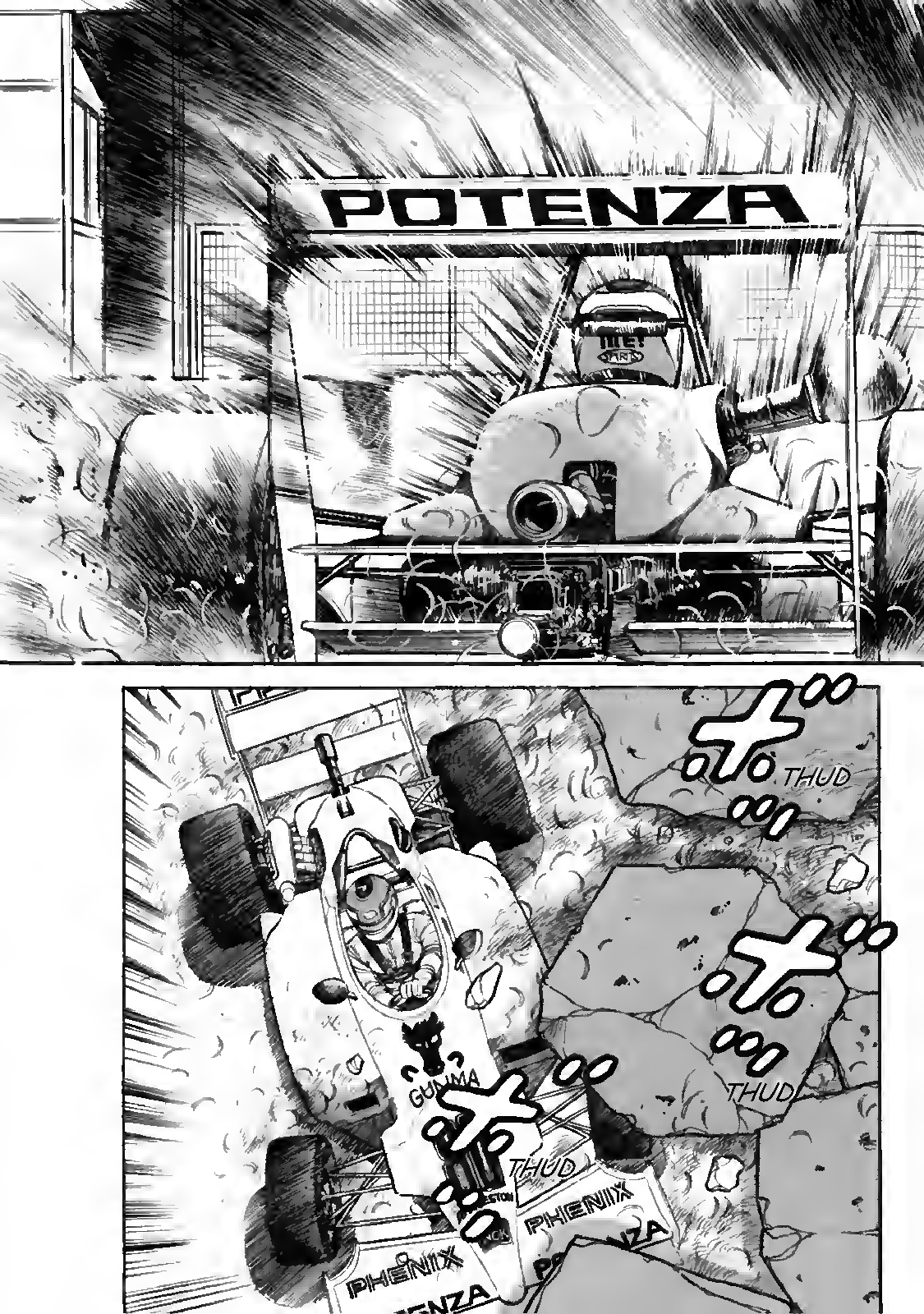

FWOOM
POTENZA
DON'T RUN BEFORE
7
KUROI Racing Team
VROOM
FLASH

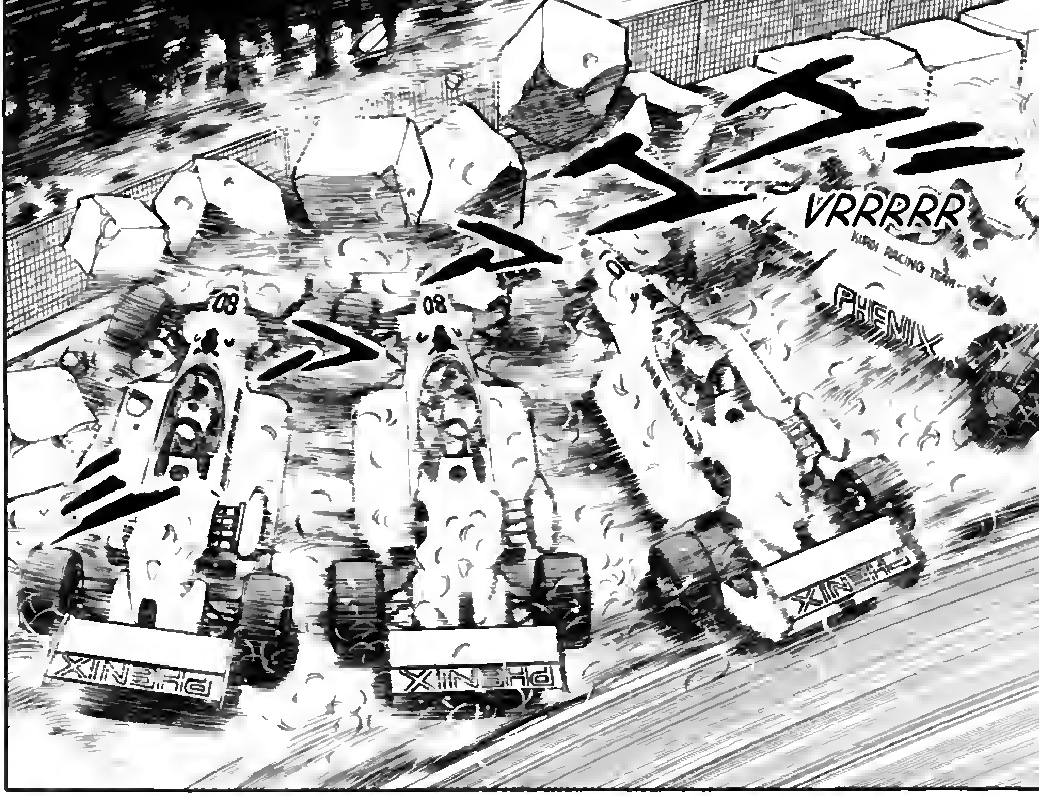

PIONEER

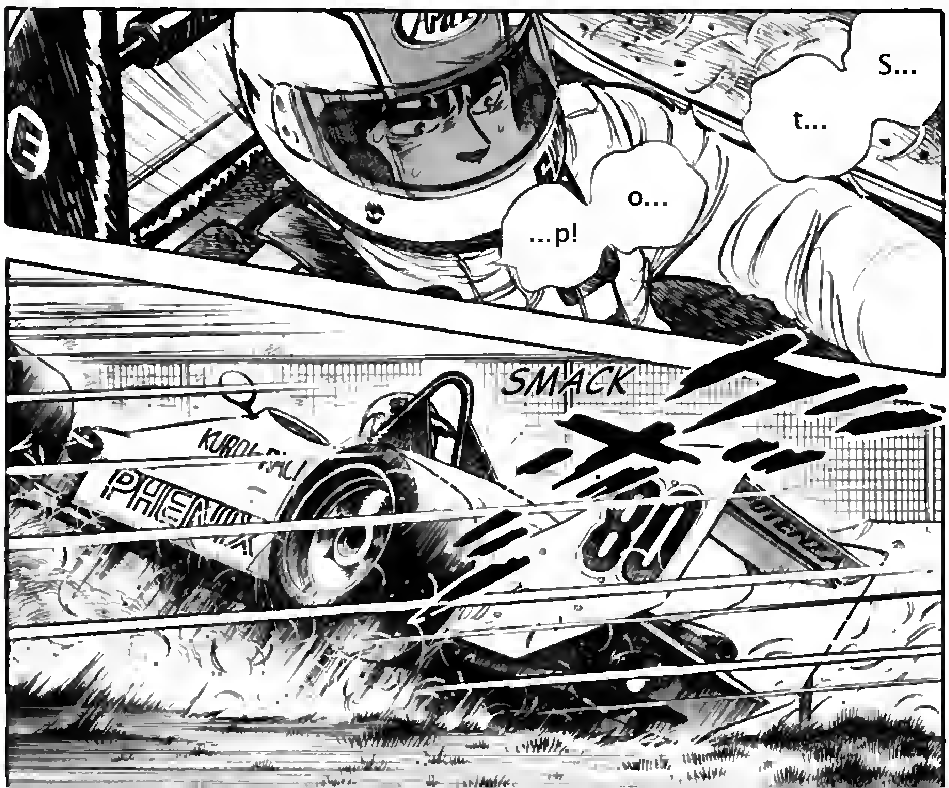

Arai
GUNMA

POTENZA
SHOOM
THUD
THUD
THUD
GUNMA
PHENIX
PHENIX
Uh...
Uh...
THUD

SHOOM
Uh...
Uh...
THUD

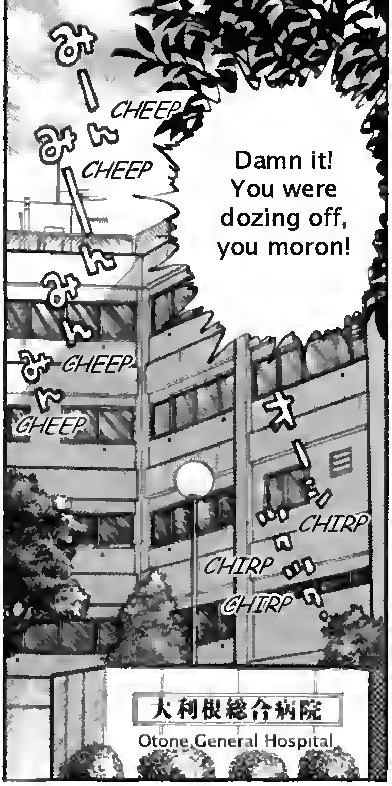

POTENZA
THUD
THUD
THUD
PHENIX
PHENIX


VRRRRR
08
08
PHOENIX
XINFA


S...
t...
o...
...p!
SMACK
KUROI RAU
PHOENIX

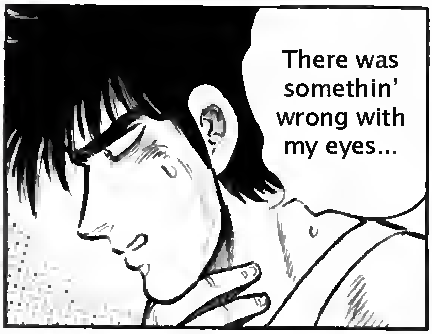
Argh!
GSSHHH
He's gone and done it, that fool!
Gunma!
ガァーーー
KSSHHH
ガァーガァー
BRRBRRBRR
KUROI RACING TEAM
80
POTENZA

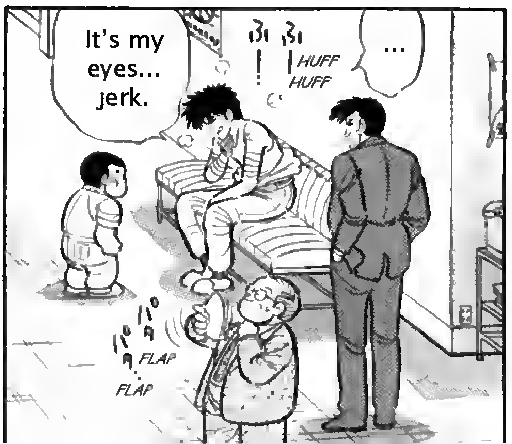
SMASH
I wasn't sleepin'! I wasn't sleepin' dammit!
How else could you have screwed up on the last corner like that?
Calm down! It's okay. All he got was some light bruises.


CHEEP
CHEEP
CHEEP
CHEEP
Damn it! You were dozing off, you moron!
CHIRP
CHIRP
CHIRP
大利根総合病院
Otone General Hospital

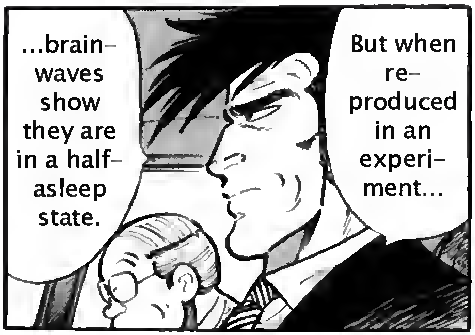
I said let go already, ya old bastard!
TWITCH

L-Let go of me...
It's not okay! You gotta make these things clear!

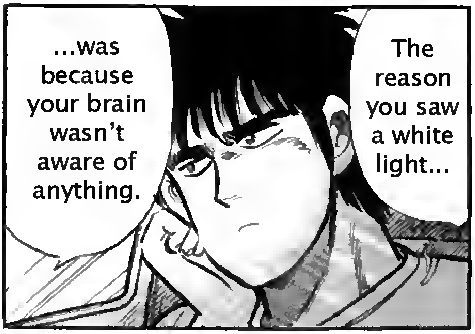

There was somethin' wrong with my eyes...

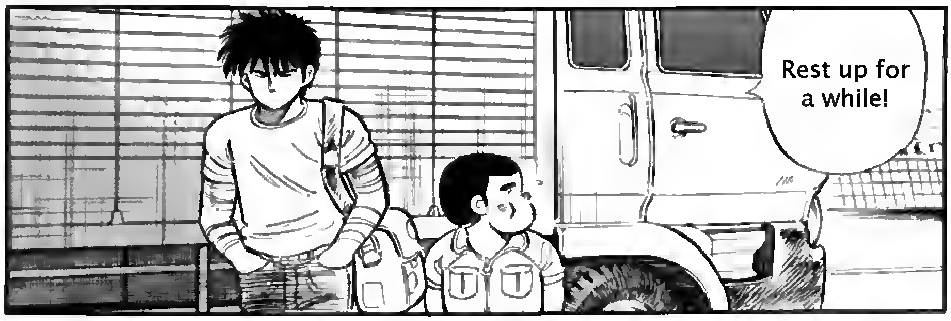

It's my eyes... jerk.
HUFF
HUFF
...
FLAP
FLAP

Suddenly things got all white...
I couldn't see nothin'... like I was being drawn into the light or some-thing.
...!?
眼科
Ophthalmology
No problems. Completely normal!
Uh...
I told you!
KUROI RACING
In other words, your eyes are open, and you can see your surroundings...
...and you look like you're awake to other people...
You weren't alert.
...but you're sleeping up here.

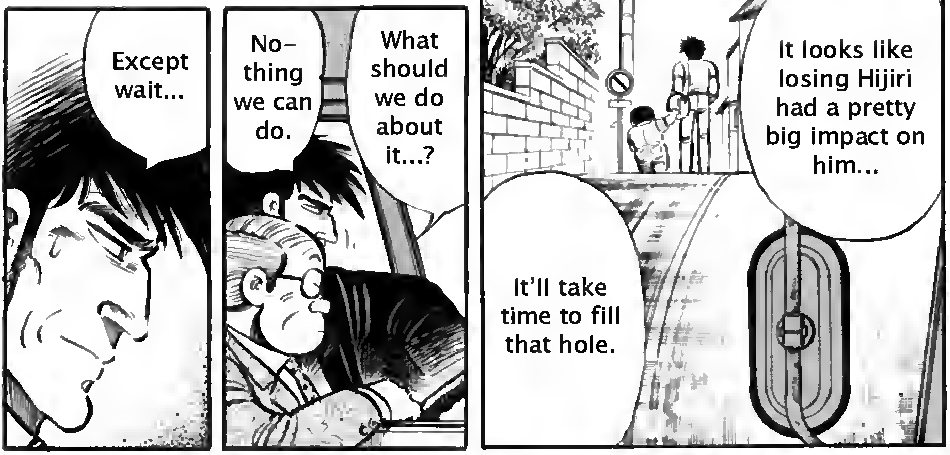

But when re-produced in an experi-ment...
...brain-waves show they are in a half-asleep state.

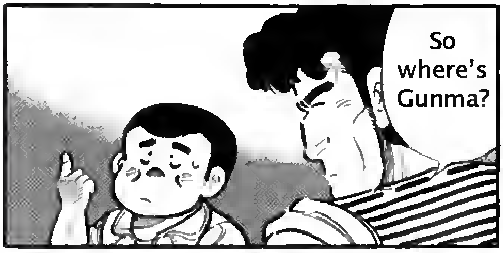
These kinds of things cause a good percentage of rear-end collisions.
VROOM
The person who caused the accident swears they weren't sleeping, and they aren't lying.


The reason you saw a white light...
...was because your brain wasn't aware of anything.


Rest up for a while!

VRRR

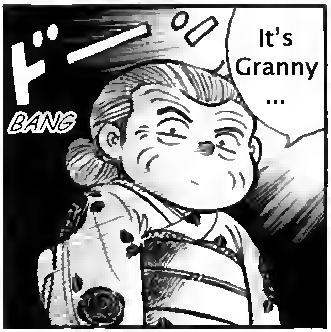

It looks like losing Hijiri had a pretty big impact on him...
It'll take time to fill that hole.
What should we do about it...?
No-thing we can do.
Except wait...


So where's Gunma?

Hmm, I see...

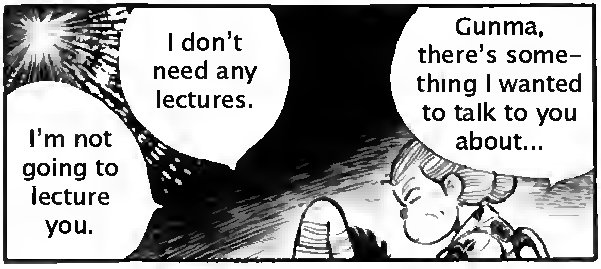
...
Hey Gunma, come down!
We're going to watch some fire-works!
Come on!
Yeah, it's nothin'.
Are your bruises alright...?
BANG!
Yay!
CLATTER

BABING
YAK YAK
YAK
YAY YAY YAK

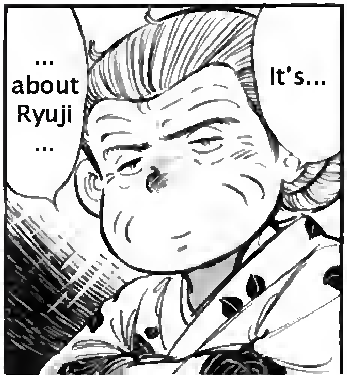

BANG
It's Granny ...

Junko ...?

SWISH


I don't need any lectures.
Gunma, there's something I wanted to talk to you about...
I'm not going to lecture you.

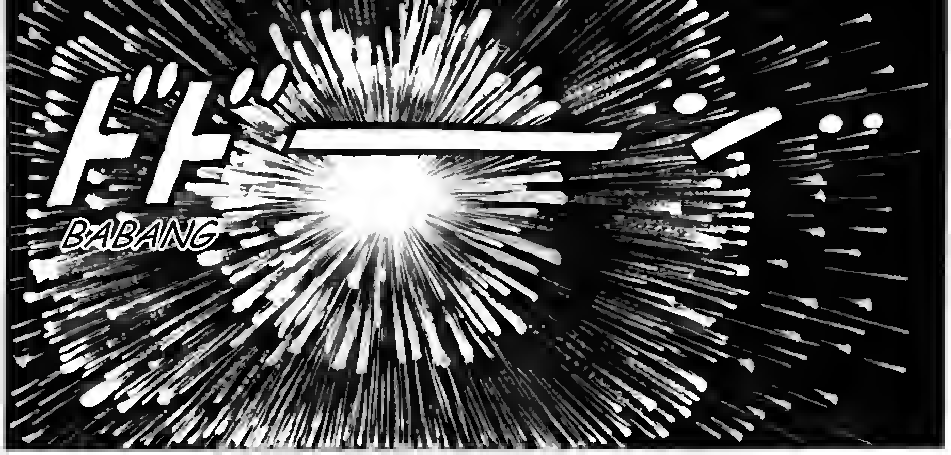
...
Don't you run!


... about Ryuji ...
It's...

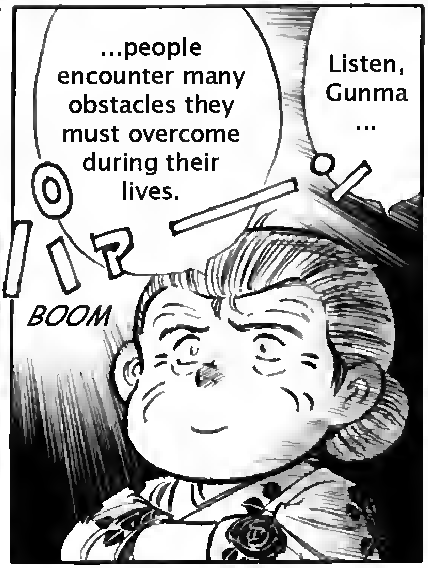
A confession of love is even worse...

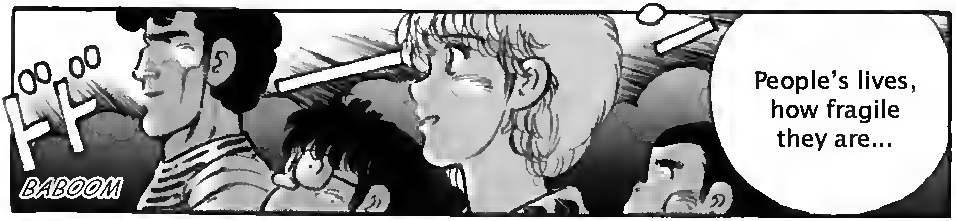
BOOM
!
I've told you before that Ryuji was a racing genius with a promising future, and Junko's fiancé...
But he unfortunately passed away the first time he took the lead in a F3 race.
What are you talkin' about...?
Actually... there's something about Ryuji that Matsuura, Kinoshita, and not even Junko know about...
A secret that only I know.
Ha ha ha...
...she still won't let me do her, damn it!
I know all that! Junko still can't forget about him. And thanks to that...
What do you mean!?
...that's not quite right.
Actually Gunma ...

!
But actually, Ryuji was already at his limit...
Junko believed it along with everyone else, and still does...
It's true that Ryuji had a promising future as a racer, there's no doubt about that.
...!
"I'm going to quit racing. I'm not confident I can race anymore." That's what he said.
The day before that race...
...there's something Ryuji said only to me.
That's what Ryuji told me...
BOOOM
Then he would marry Junko, and quit racing once and for all.
But first, he wanted to get first in a F3 race no matter what...
...and then got sucked into the void beyond it right after...
In a way, he overcame an obstacle himself...
...he went off the course and crashed right into the fence...
Then as soon as his wish came true and he took the lead...


BABANG

...in a constant miniature cycle of life and death.
And every time they overcome one, their life flickers...
BANG
POPOPOP


...people encounter many obstacles they must overcome during their lives.
Listen, Gunma ...
BOOM


BABOOM
People's lives, how fragile they are...

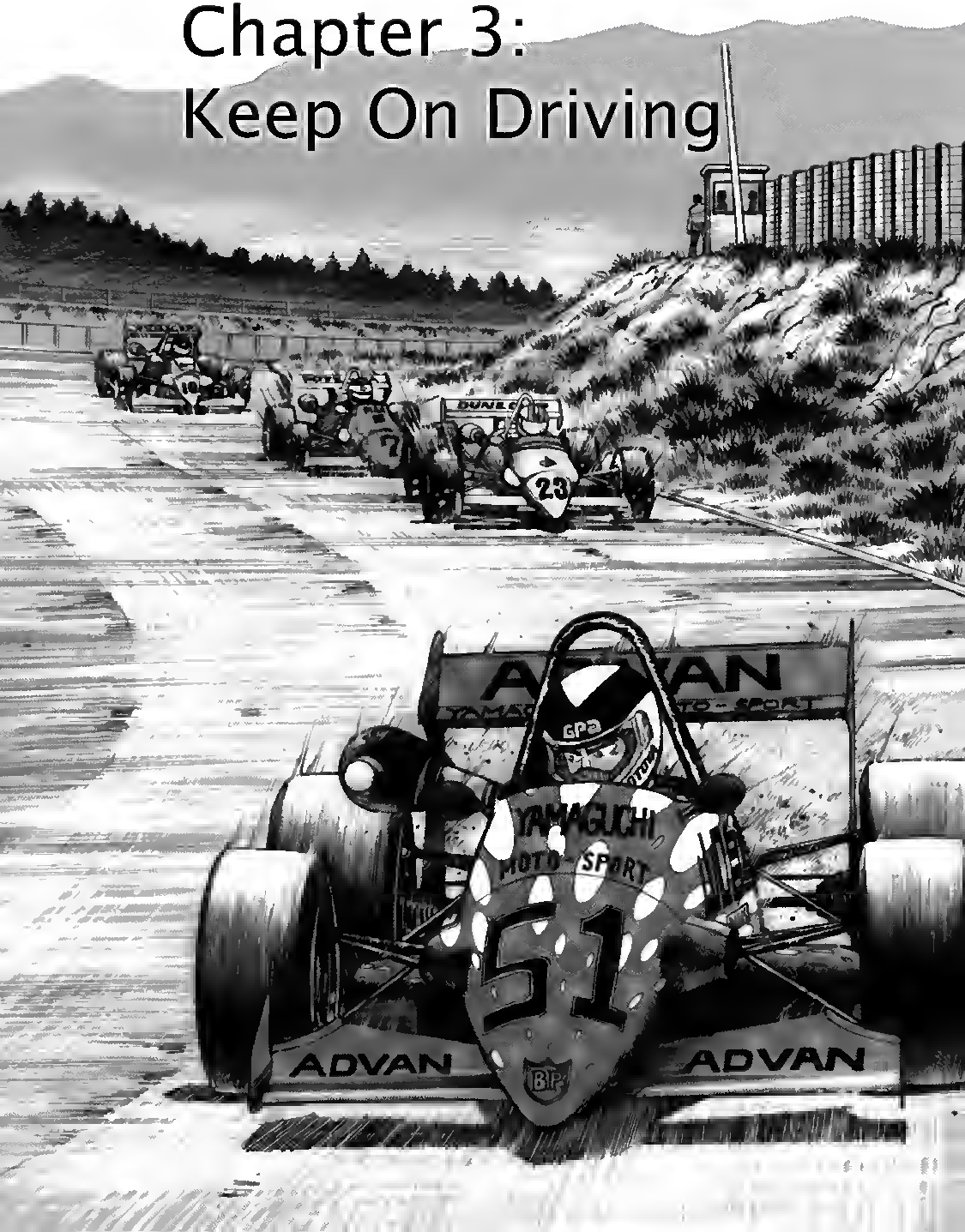
Ryuji...

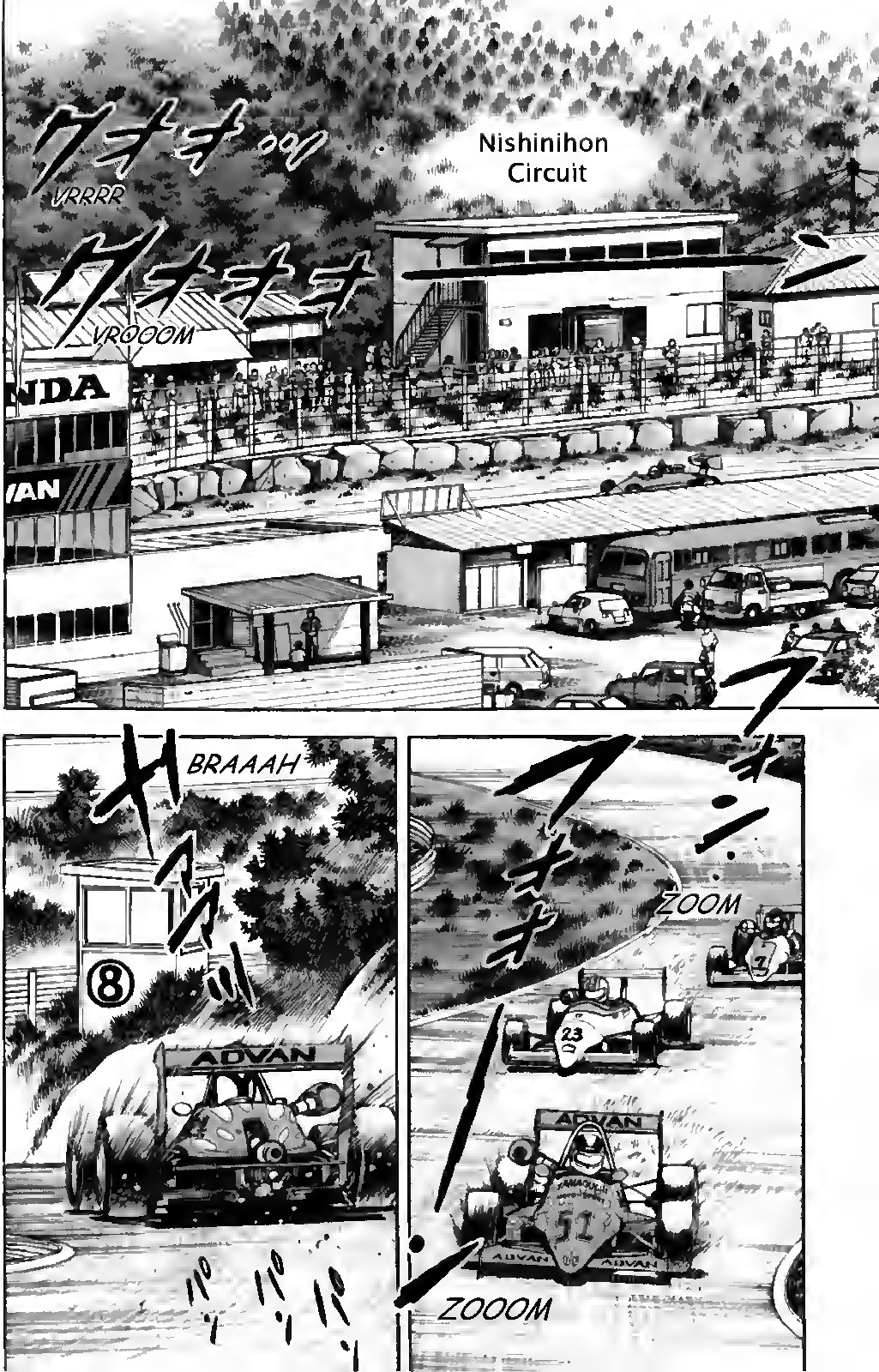
ドォ
BOOOM
BABANG
BOOM
GRAA-
HHHH...!

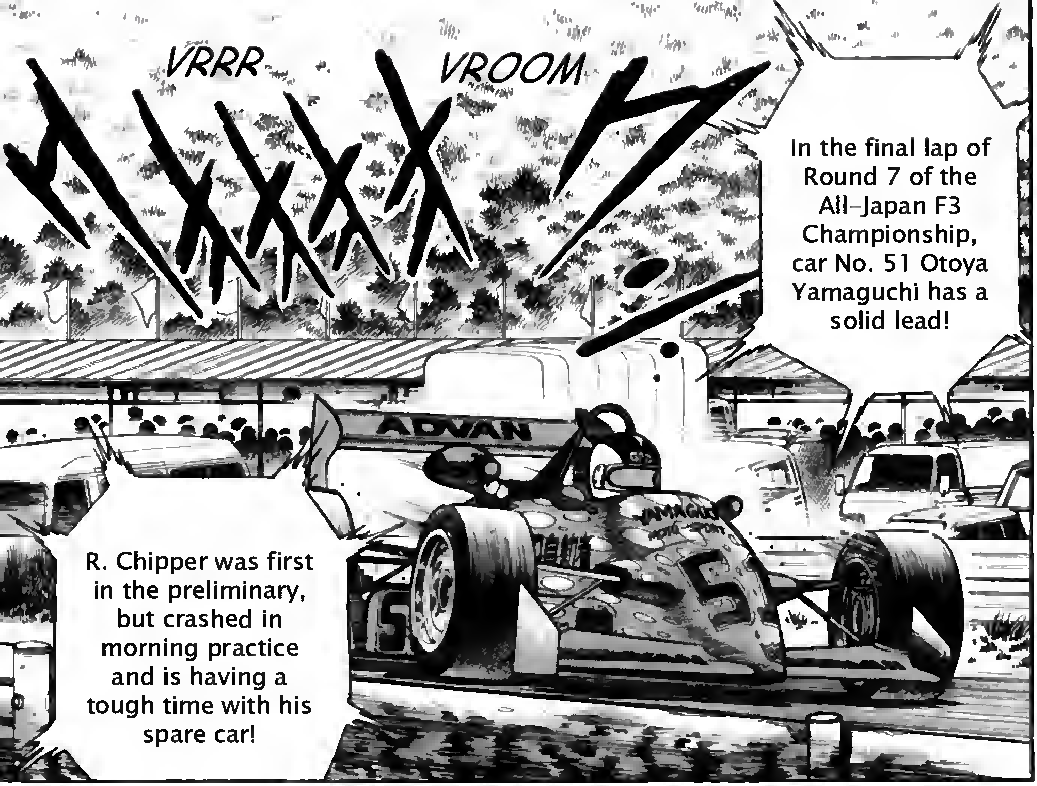
F

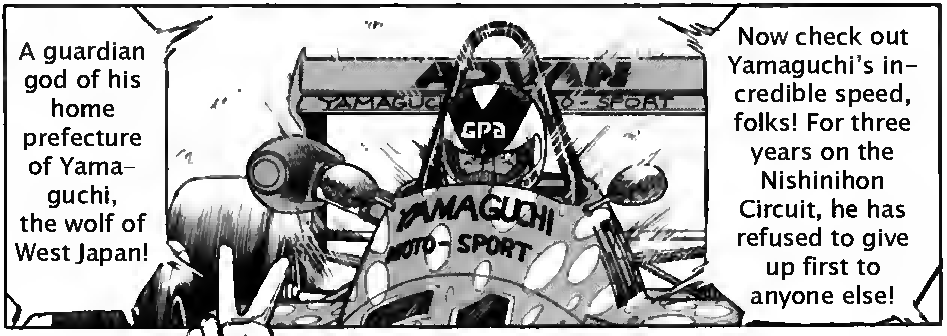
Vol.9

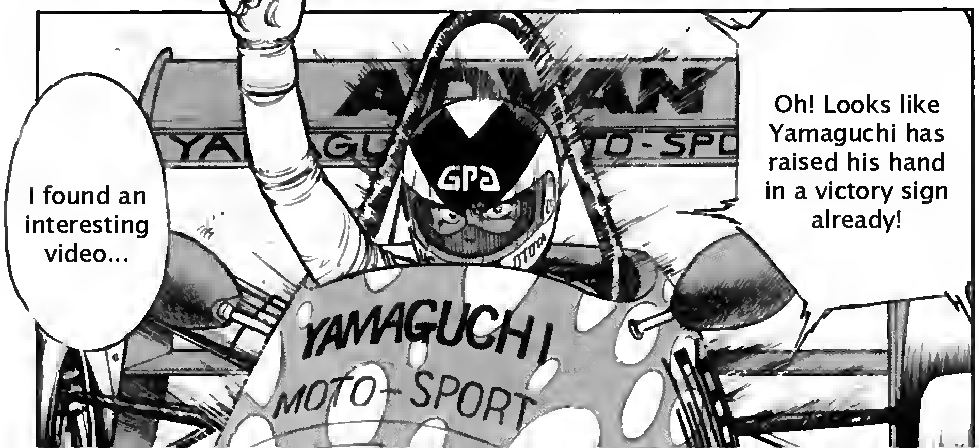
Chapter 3:
Keep On Driving




Nishinihon Circuit
VRRRR
VROOM
BRAAAH
ZOOM
ZOOOM
ADVAN

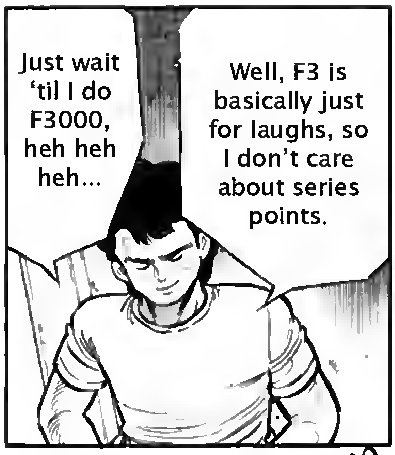

VRRR
VROOM
ADVAN
In the final lap of Round 7 of the All-Japan F3 Championship, car No. 51 Otoya Yamaguchi has a solid lead!
R. Chipper was first in the preliminary, but crashed in morning practice and is having a tough time with his spare car!


A guardian god of his home prefecture of Yamaguchi, the wolf of West Japan!
ADVAN
GPa
YAMAGUCHI
MOTO-SPORT
Now check out Yamaguchi's incredible speed, folks! For three years on the Nishinihon Circuit, he has refused to give up first to anyone else!

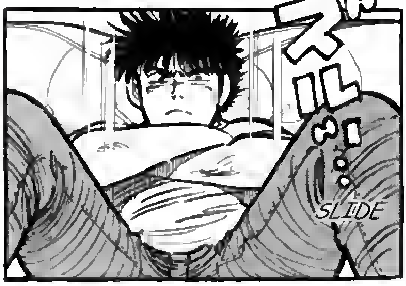

I found an interesting video...
ADVAN
GPa
YAMAGUCHI
MOTO-SPORT
Oh! Looks like Yamaguchi has raised his hand in a victory sign already!

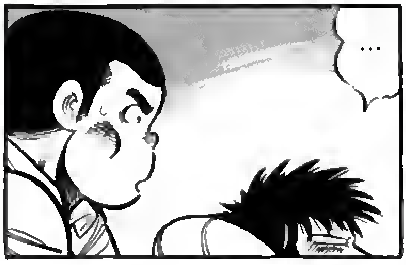
That's right. I want Gunma to see it.
Come right away.
GP3
YAMAGUCHI
OTOYA
You skipped Round 7, so Yasu went and took a video for you.
This is his third year in F3, but he's kind of an oddball. He hasn't raced anywhere but Nishinihon Circuit.
The guy on top of the winner's podium...
...his name is Otoya Yamagu-chi...

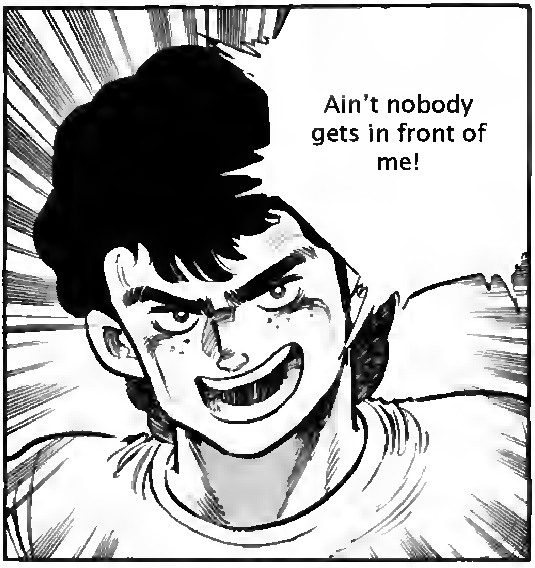
Hmm ...
So what about this guy?
Just watch. He mentions you in his interview later. Pretty interesting.
With these results, why don't you enter the other races in the season?
Well, I'd like to. ...
Won every race since my debut! I must be a genius!
Thanks.
Congratulations on your win.
You're unbeatable on the Nishinihon Circuit so far.
WRINNNG
And back home, Grandma's stuck in her death bed, see!
So the team is a family thing...
But Poppa is team coach, Momma is the record keeper, my little brother does the time and holds up the board. The family business is a repair shop called Yamaguchi Auto...
I see ...

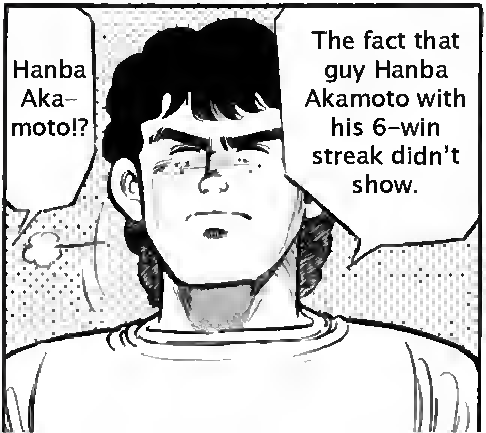

Just wait 'til I do F3000, heh heh heh...
Well, F3 is basically just for laughs, so I don't care about series points.

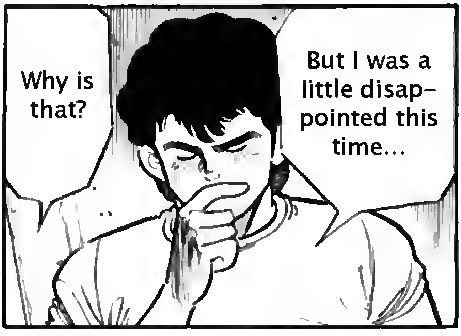
Do that and it'll piss off God, am I right!?
You think the whole family can just leave a dying old lady alone and go waltzing off to Suzuka and Fuji and Tsukuba? Huh?
Uh... yes, right...


SLIDE

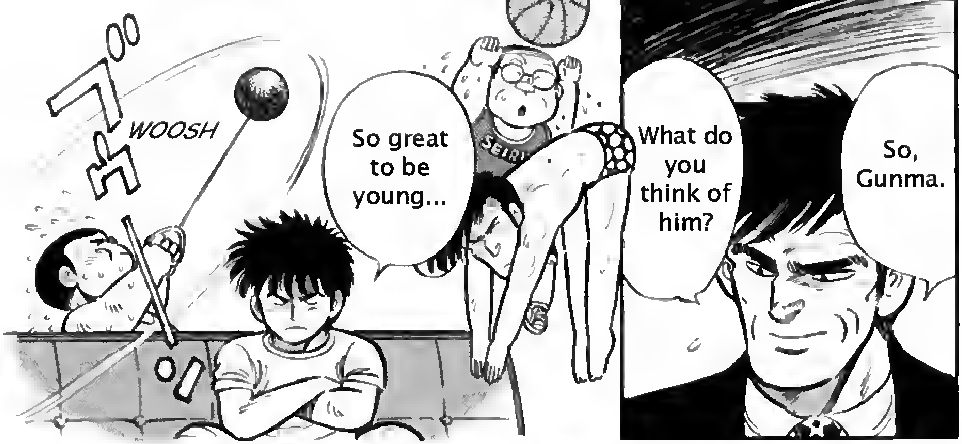

...

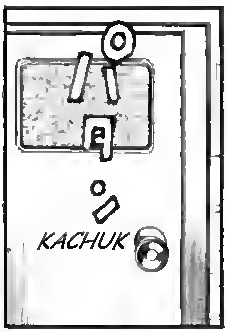

Ain't nobody gets in front of me!


Hanba Aka-moto!?
The fact that guy Hanba Akamoto with his 6-win streak didn't show.

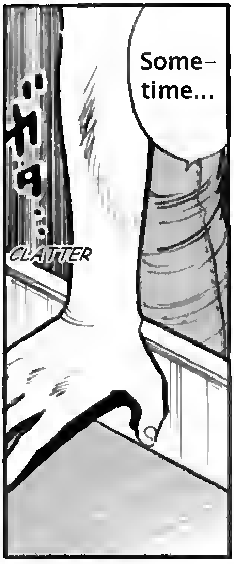

Why is that?
But I was a little disap-pointed this time...

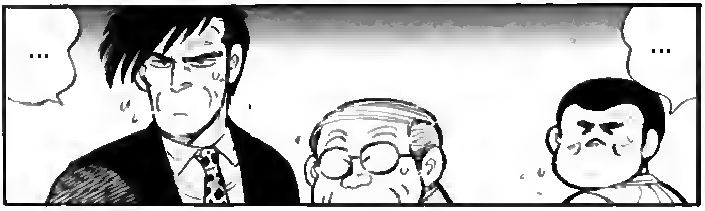
It's Gunma Akagi ...
Why didn't that Hanba Akamoto come? I was really lookin' forward to it...
TWITCH
D– do you mean Gunma Akagi from Kuroki Racing Team...?
You were scared of coming all the way to Nishinihon and losing to me, you wimp!
だっはっは…
HA HA HA
I get it, Hanba Akamoto! You were scared of me, weren't you!?
...
...
You go ahead and win races that I'm not in, Hanba Akamoto!
はっはっ
HA HA HA
But here at Nishinihon Circuit, ain't nobody gets in front of me!

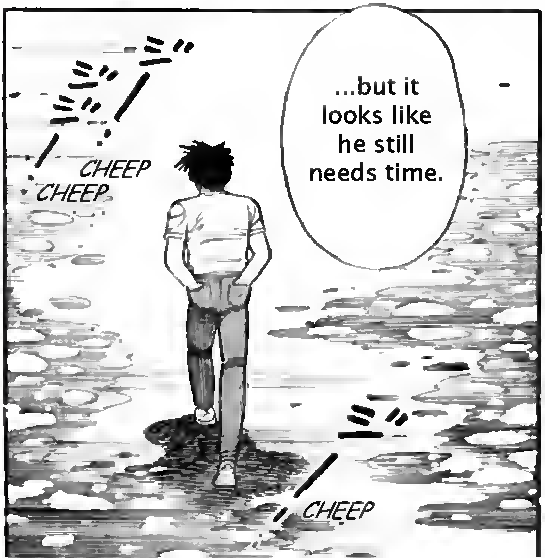

WOOSH
So great to be young...
SEIRI
What do you think of him?
So, Gunma.

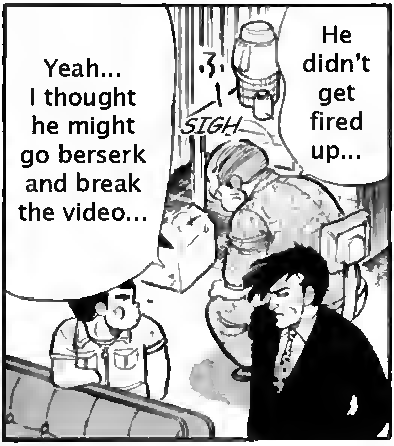

KACHUK

I'll be looking forward to it...
...let's go to Nishi-nihon...


Some-time...
CLATTER

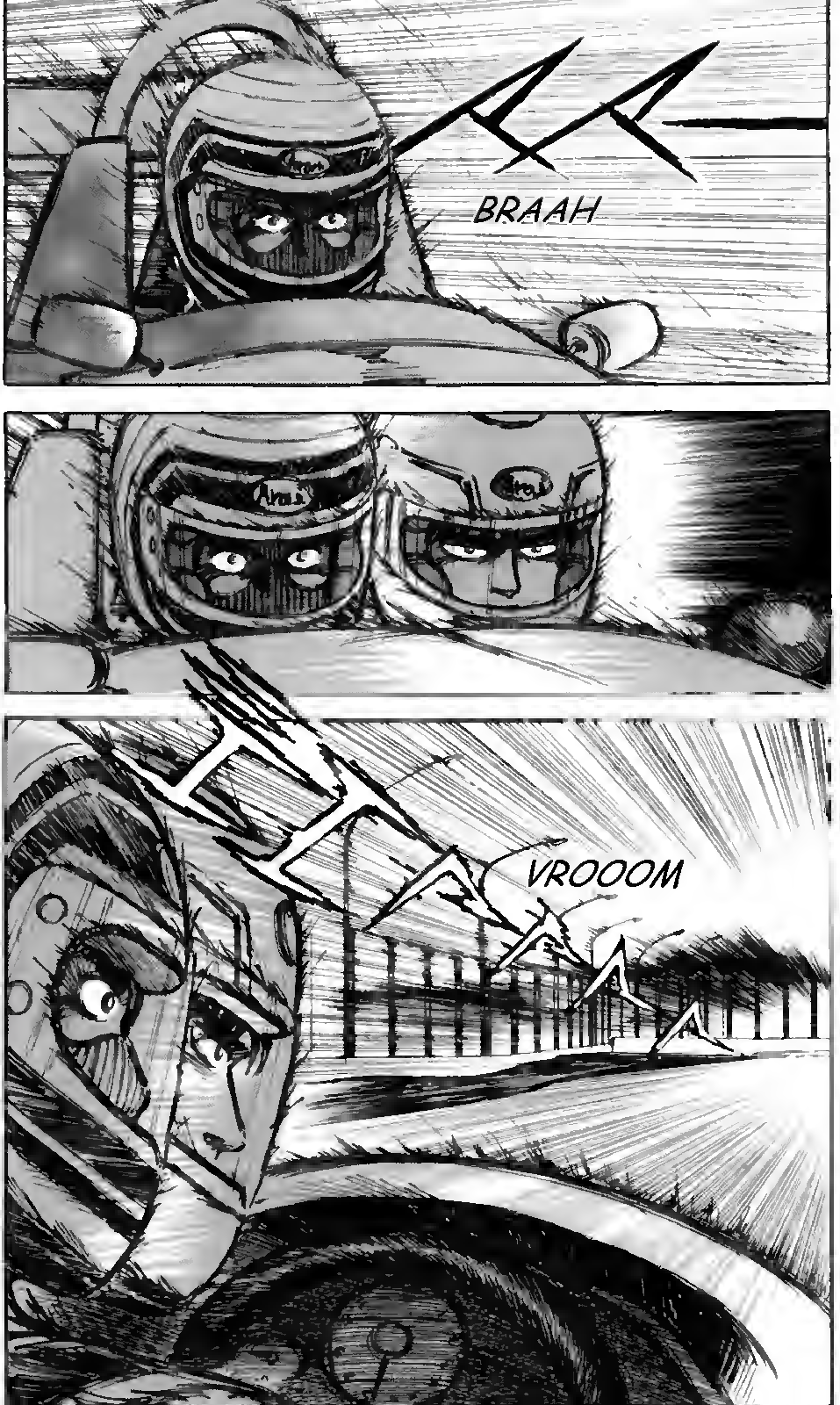

...
...

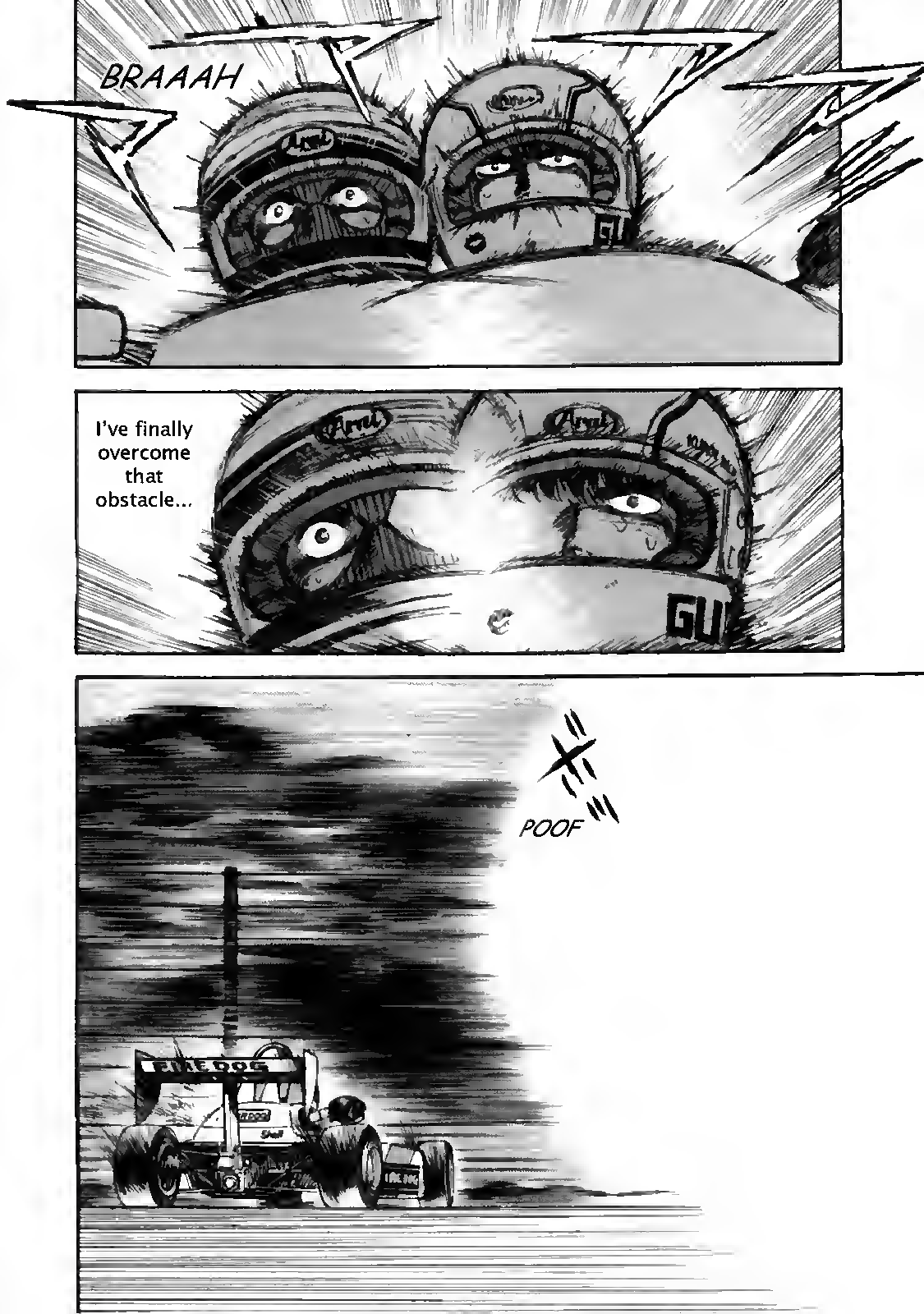

CHEEP
CHEEP
...but it looks like he still needs time.
CHEEP


Yeah... I thought he might go berserk and break the video...
SIGH
He didn't get fired up...

How's this?
Okay, okay Ryuji!
How many times have I heard that?
Give me a nice pose!
I'll win this race for us.
Then we'll get married!
I love you, Junko!
RYU
...
But this time I'm serious!
Ryuji...
This time I'm serious...
He truly planned to marry Junko after that race...
...was already at his limit...

VRRR
OOOM
SAEKI
Shell
27
CHAMPION
CHAMPION
This time I'm serious ...
Ryuji!
DUNLOP
Yes! Ryuji's in first!
Go go!
SAEKI
Come on Ryuji!
Yes! Keep it going Ryuji!

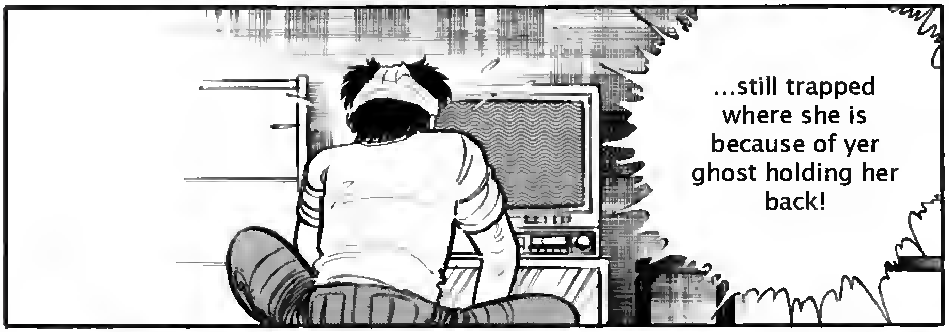

BRAAH
VROOOM

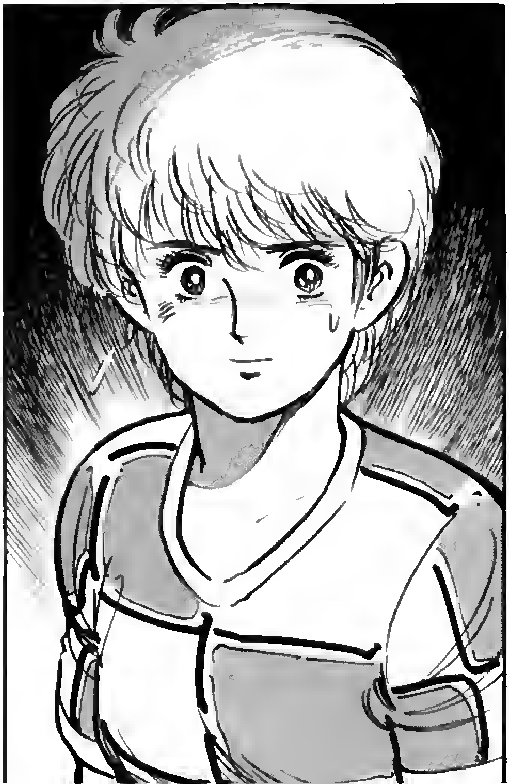

BRAAAH
I've finally overcome that obstacle...
POOF

GAAASHHH

Huff Huff Huff...
Damn... I fell asleep...
KSHHHHH
JERK
CLICK
Giving up 'cause of something as lame as F3...!
That may be fine for you, but still...
Every time they overcome an obstacle, their life flickers in a constant miniature cycle of life and death...
Ryuji... is that all...?
Was that as far as you could make it...?

What happens to Junko!? What about her!?
Thanks to you, Junko is all alone...

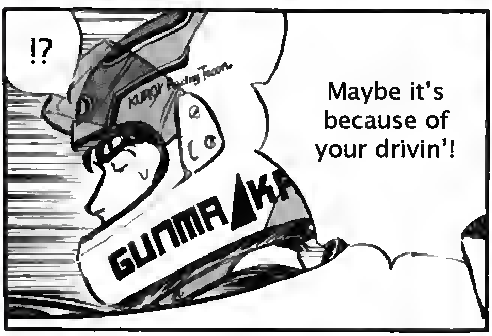

...still trapped where she is because of yer ghost holding her back!

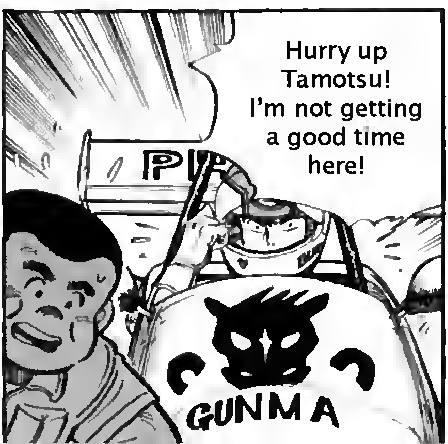


...
小森純子
Junko Komori

VROOM
VROOM
All-Japan F3 Championship- Round 8-Tsukuba Official preliminary begins-
VROOM
VROOM
PHOENIX
GUNMA
80
POTENZA
POTENZA

Really?
Nope, it's still under-steerin' dammit!
VRRR

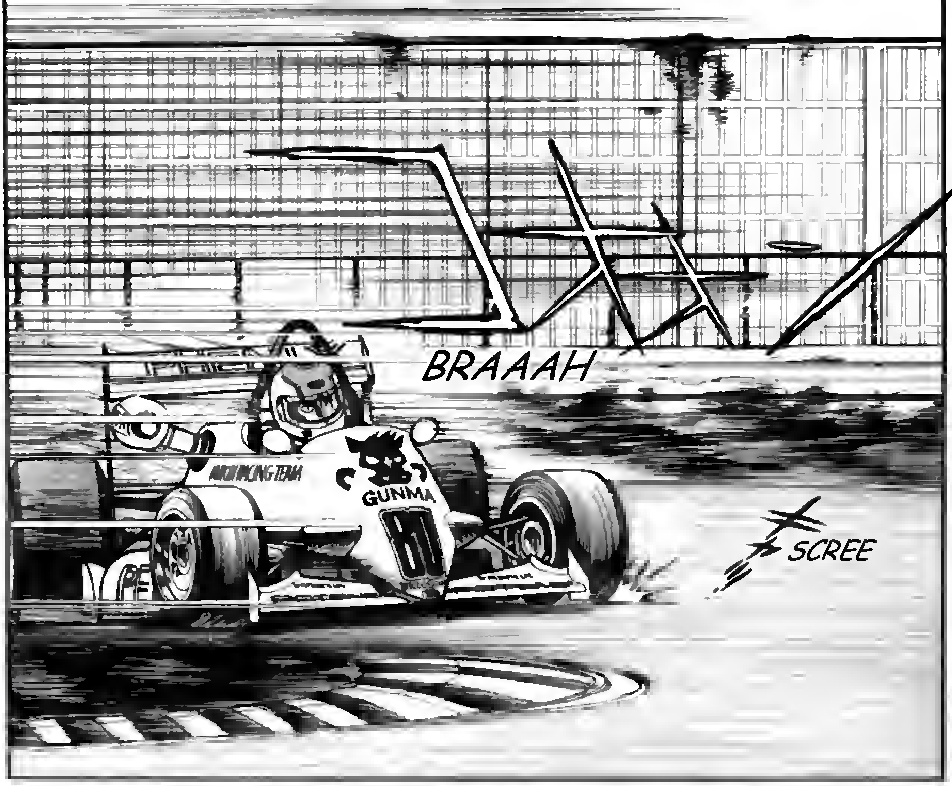

!?
Maybe it's because of your drivin'!
GUNMA

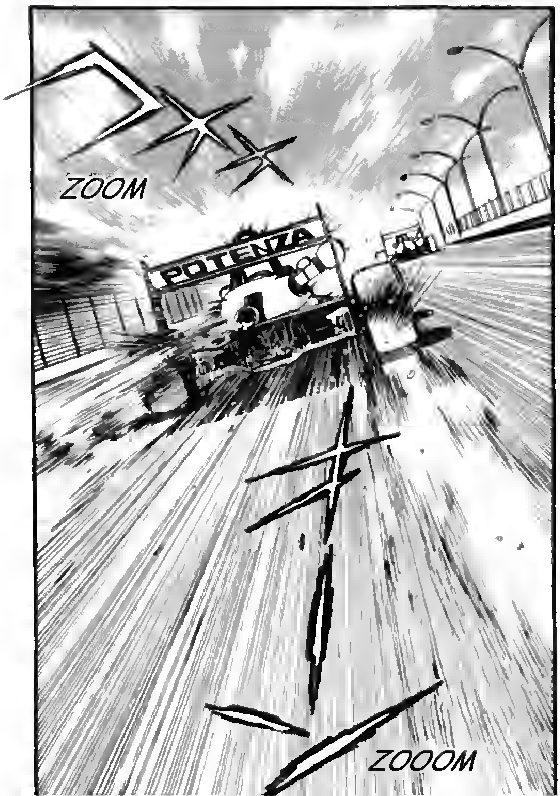

Hurry up Tamotsu! I'm not getting a good time here!
GUNMA

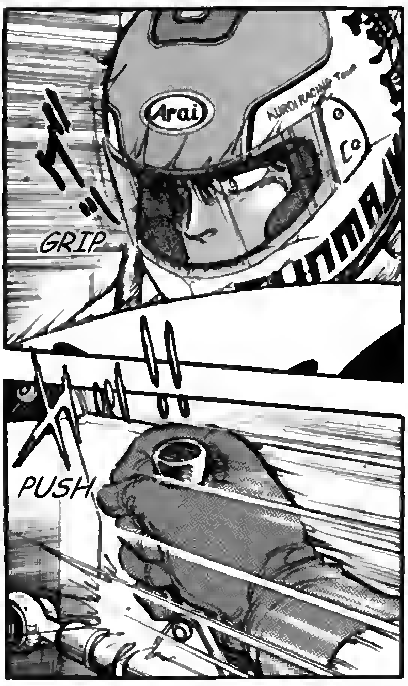
KURUI Racing Team
GUNMA
Hanba Akamoto!
GP3
OTOYA
YAMAGUCHI
GRR VRROM
Later!
ADVAN
KURUI RACING TEAM
...Tsk ...
...
But he's here racing now!
What's he doing here? I thought he only raced at Nishinihon...
...

F
VOL.9

Chapter 4: Jokers


BRAAAH
GUNMA
SCREE


ZOOM
POTENZA
ZOOOM


Arai
GRIP
PUSH

ZOOOOOM
How is he?
TOYOTA
KURO RACING TEAM
PHENIX
Good.
FWIP
FWIP

I guess that will do for now...
VROOM
ZOOM
55 seconds...
He got 55 seconds! This should be enough...

I always had fire, jackass!
There were reasons why I only raced Nishinihon.
RUVAN
What are you doing here at Tsukuba!?
YAK
YAK
Otoya Yamaguchi, I thought you didn't enter races besides at Nishinihon Circuit.
Have you finally found that fire!?

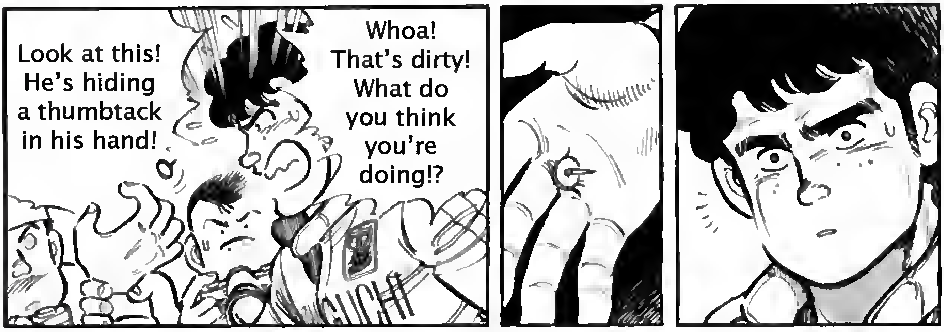
Be-
cause
...
So why did you decide to come to Tsukuba this time?
You were too kind to leave her all alone by going places other than Nishini-hon.
I know... You said your grandmother is bedridden, correct?
HIC
...Grandma went and kicked the bucket...
I... I see...
Oh...
No... You were third.
Hmph, doesn't matter, I know I'm first.
Tsu-kuba's a piece of cake ...
Otoya, preliminary results are out!
ADVAN
YAMAGUC
MOTORS

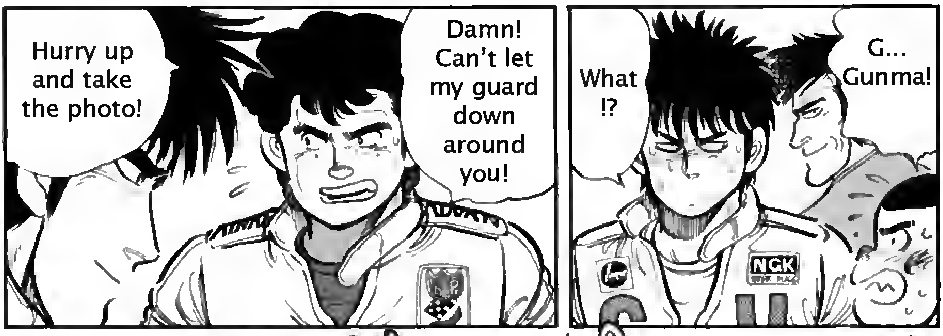
Can't be helped. This is your first time on Tsukuba.
What!? Then who's first...?
Gunma Akagi.
Hanba, huh...?
Hmph ...
Hey, let's go with him!
Yeah I got it...
Just introduce yourself, don't you get in a fight!
Well then... I think I'll go over and introduce myself.
ガヤ・YAK
ガヤ・YAK
Heh heh...

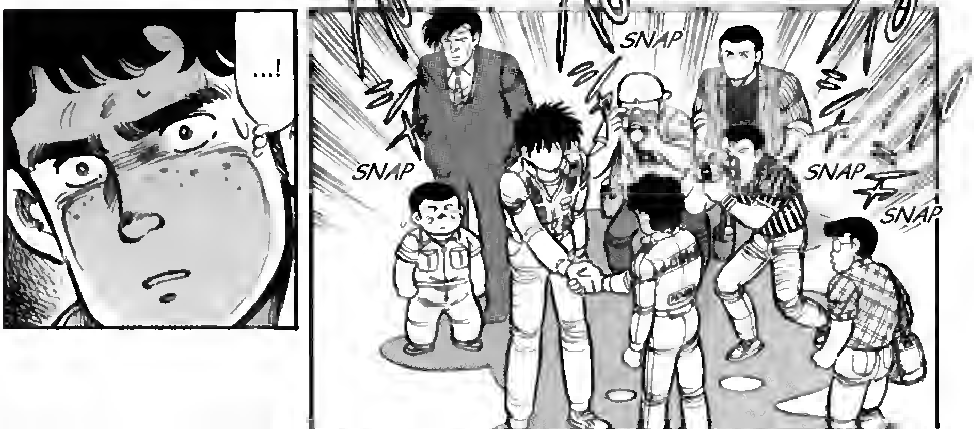
Hey there, got a minute?
Sure.
Heh heh. That Round 1 at Suzuka was pretty amazing, Akagi...
I was really moved by that podium scene when I saw it on TV.
Standing on the podium holding Hijiri, that was a real tearjerker...
I got goose-bumps all over just watching it.
ADVAN

...I'll bring you to the podium, too.
It wasn't goosebumps really so much as it was making my skin crawl...
I see ...
Well then... If you die...
The two of you shaking hands before the final would make for a great photo.
Will Akagi's 6-win streak be stopped by Otoya Yamaguchi, who has won all his races at Nishinihon?
All right? C'mon, please?
No need to be so tense... Would you mind letting us take some pictures?

YAMAGUCHI


Look at this! He's hiding a thumbtack in his hand!
Whoa! That's dirty! What do you think you're doing!?


Hurry up and take the photo!
Damn! Can't let my guard down around you!
What !?
G... Gunma!
NGK

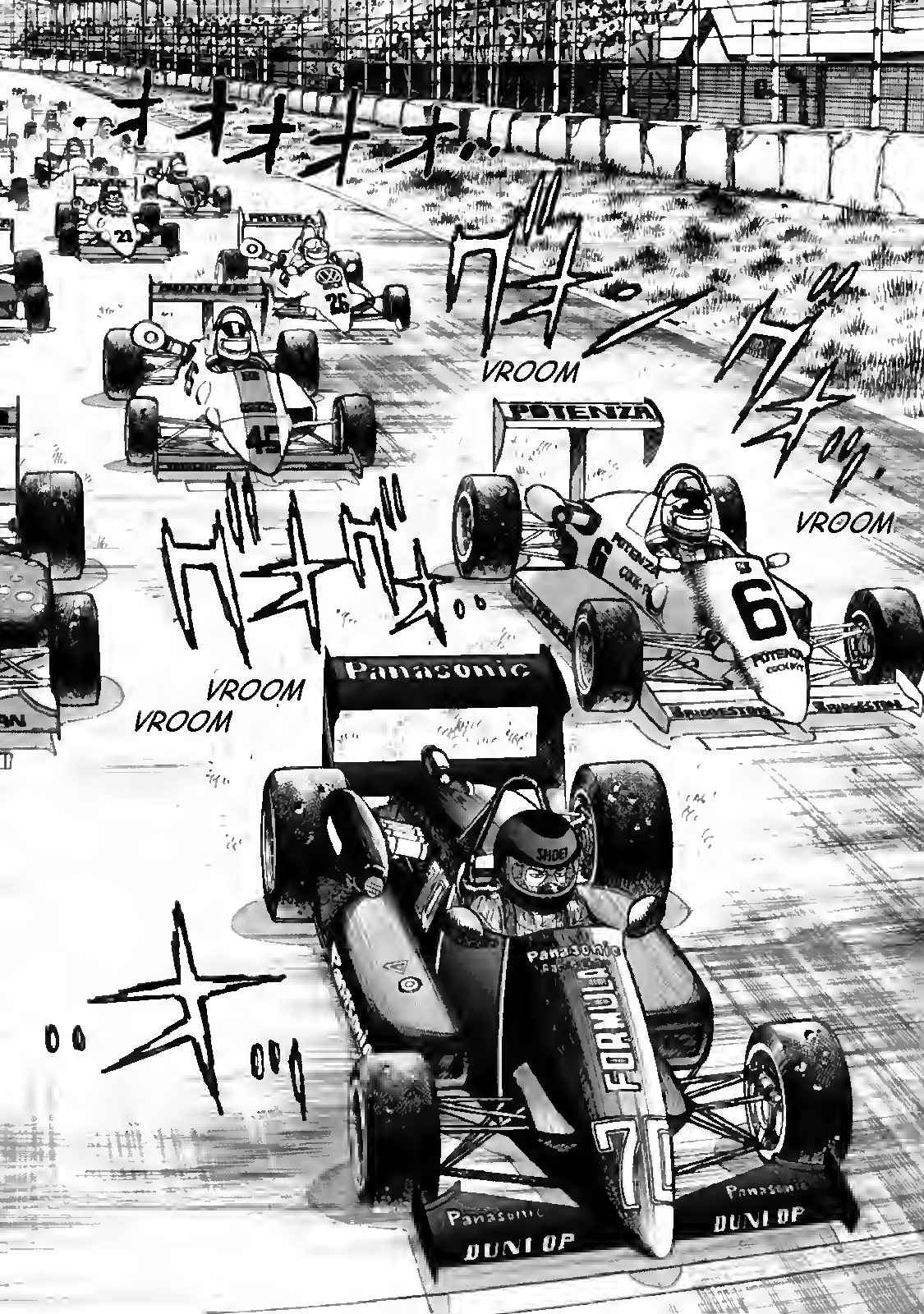

...!
SNAP
SNAP
SNAP
SNAP

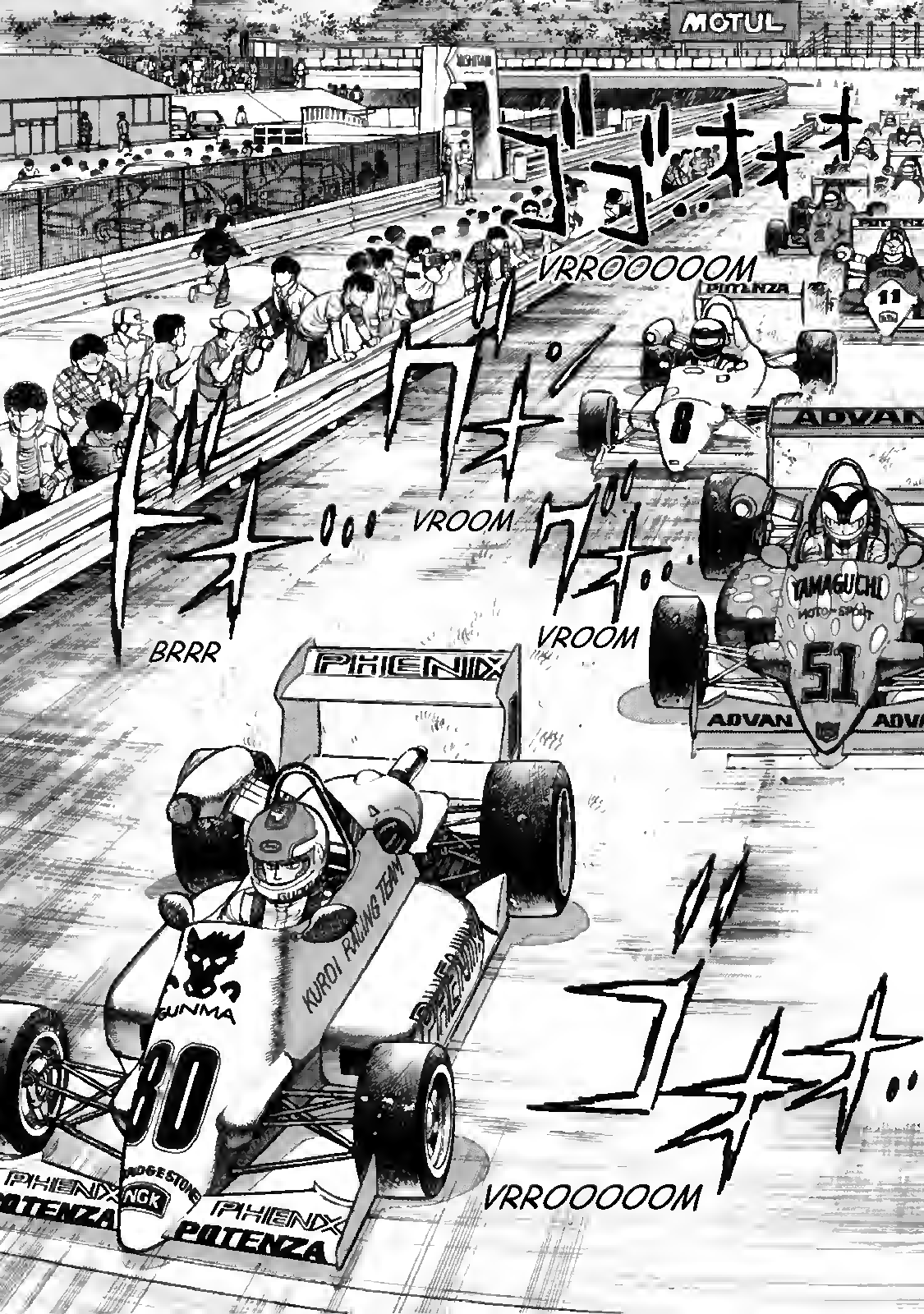
Oh! A historic scene! But you forgot about me!
Oh, it's R. Chip-per.
Don't be mean, let me join in on the fun! That's okay, right?
What the hell... It's like shaking hands with a jellyfish...
SQUISH
グニャ…
SNAP
SNAP
SNAP
HAHAHA
Let's take a photo together. What a nice scene! Let's play fair in today's race!
Dude ... What?
Urgh ...
YAMAGUCHI MOTORS
Panasonic
SHOEI
DUNLOP

He's young. Young and ignorant!
Reckless young guys are very dangerous.
Akagi, I'll give you a warning.
Watch out for Otoya Yamaguchi.
Mr. Akagi, I'll be winning today's race!
Your Japanese is pretty good, Chipper.
I wonder about that...
...he's not the only reckless one.
Thanks, Chipper... but...
That's why you've been racing smoothly and have a 6-win streak... right?
You look to me like you're afraid of something.
It's just mind games...
HAHAHA

Afraid?
Chipper's a pro. He's good at mind games. Just ignore him.
...acting like I'm scared?
Am I...
The F3 final race will start soon.
Entrants, please line up on the starting grid.
What do I got to be afraid of, damn it...

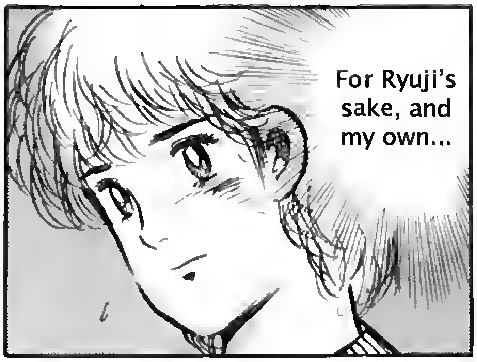
MOTUL
ゴゴオオオ…オオオオ…
VRROOOOOM
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
BRRR
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
VROOM
ブオ…
VRROOOOOM
PHENIX
POTENZA
KUROI RACING TEAM
GUNMA
80
BRIDGESTONE
NGK
PHENIX
POTENZA
ADVAN
YAMAGUCHI
MOTOR SPORT
51
ADVAN
ADVAN
POTENZA
6
Panasonic
SHOEI
FORMULA
7C
Panasonic
DUNLOP
Panasonic
DUNLOP


オオオオ…
VROOM
VROOM
VROOM
VROOM
POTENZA
Panasonic
FORMULA
DUNLOP
DUNLOP


MOTUL
ゴゴゴォォォ
VRROOOOOM
PITLANZA
11
ADVAN
8
ブォン…
VROOM
ブォン…
VROOM
ブォン…
BRRR
YAMAGUCHI
MOTO-SPORT
51
ADVAN
ADVA
PHENIX
GUNMA
KUROI RACING TEAM
80
BRIDGESTONE
NGK
PHENIX
POTENZA
PHENIX
POTENZA
ゴォォ…
VRROOOOOM

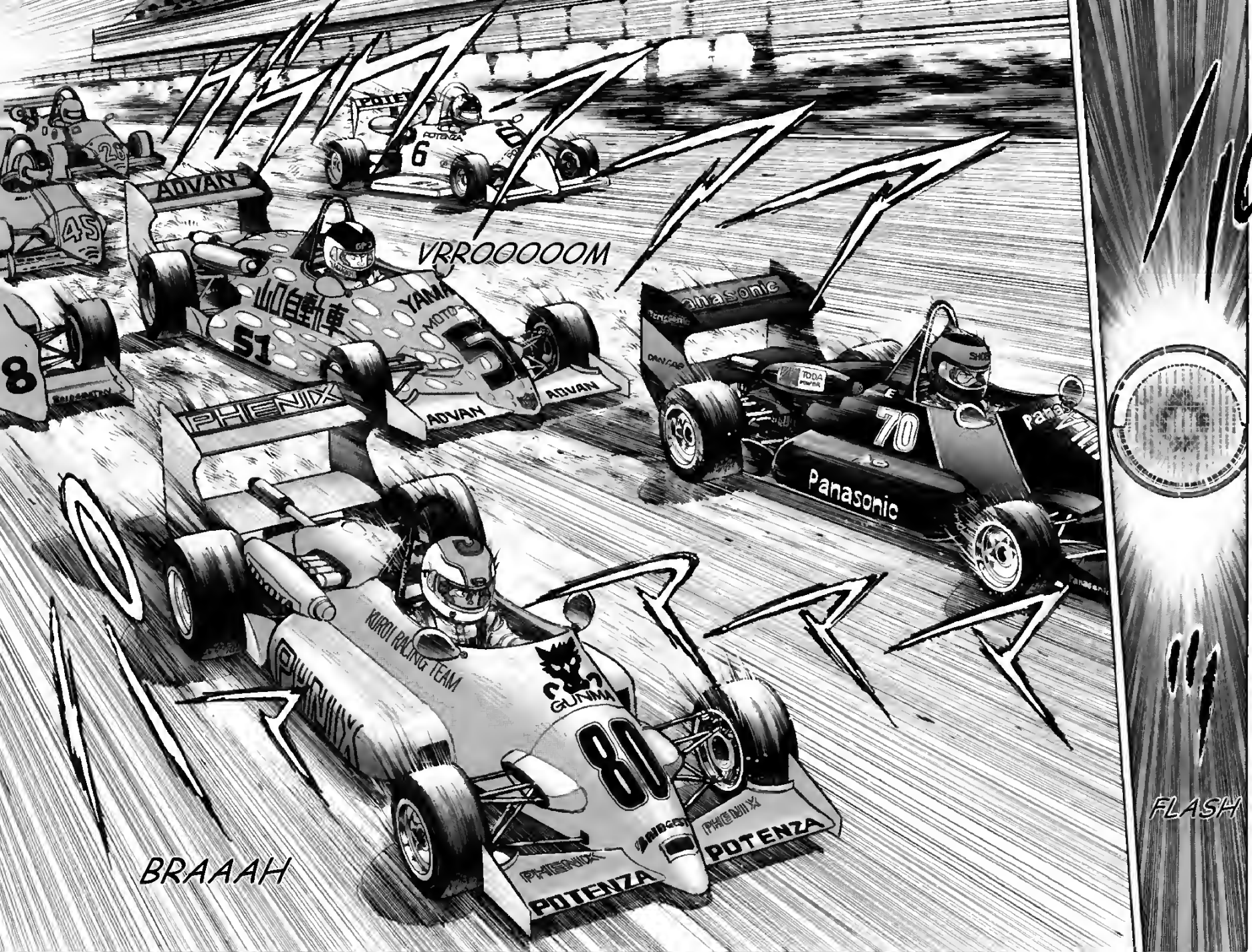
The race will begin after this lap.
VRROOM
VRRR
The cars have all entered the formation lap!
At long last, the final race of Round 8 of the All-Japan F3 Championship!
TSUKUBA
Are you getting married?
Why so suddenly?
You're quitting!?
Thank you for everything.
Resignation
No, it's not like that.
That's too bad, you were our star instructor.

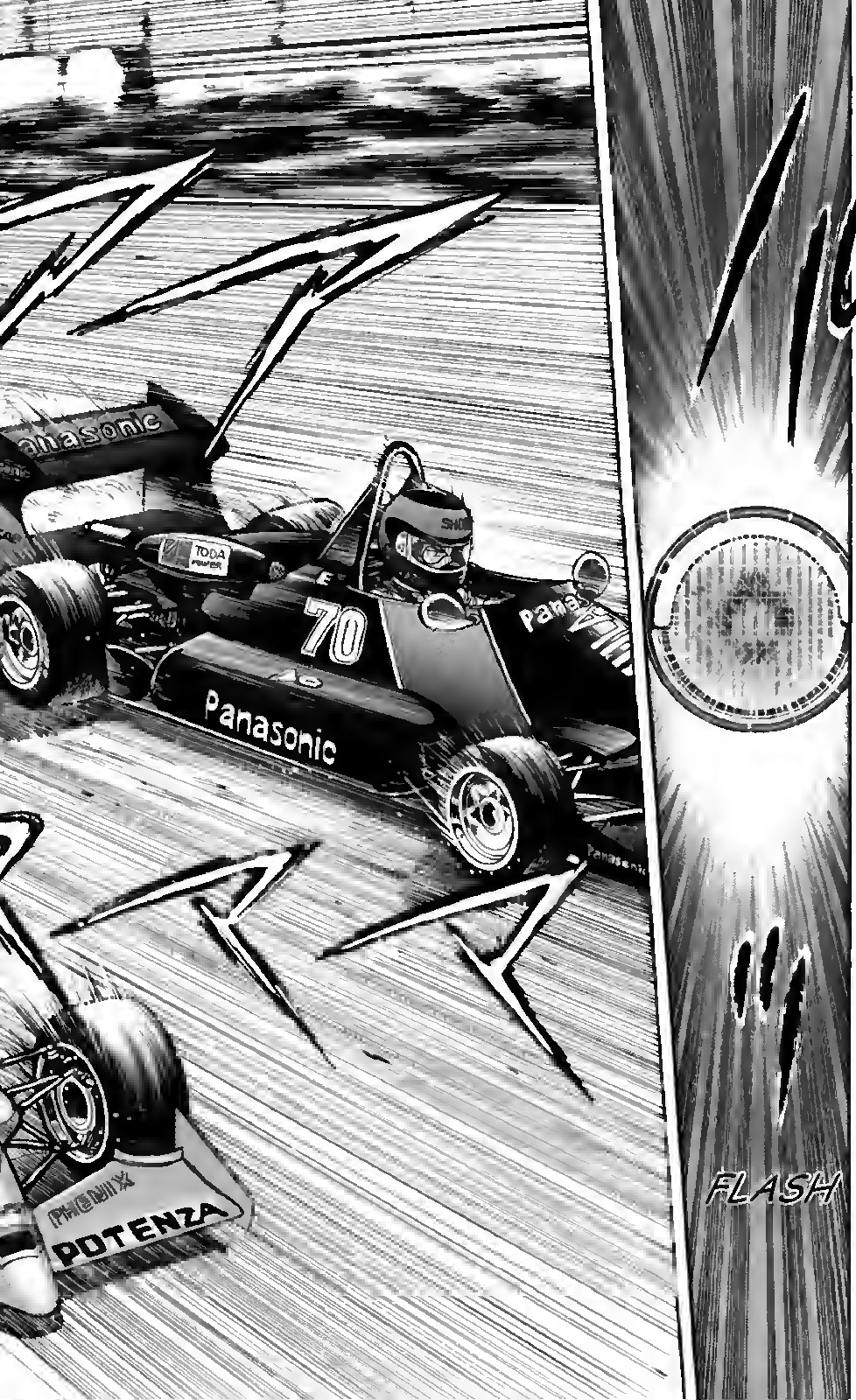
The formation lap is over and all the cars are lined up back on the grid, just waiting for the signal to turn green!

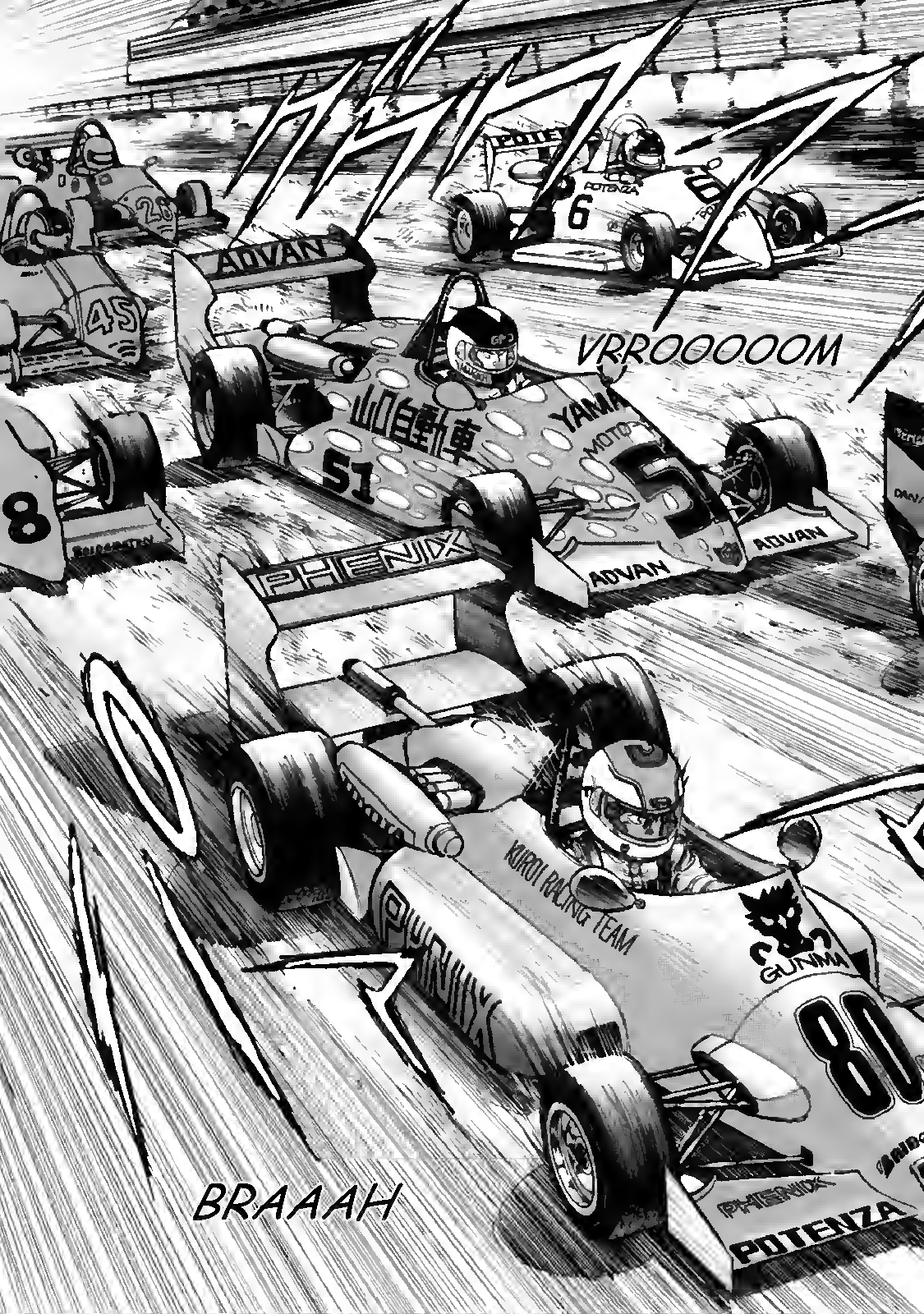

For Ryuji's sake, and my own...

I'll follow you, Gunma...
I've decided. I'll go to all of your races.
Whether they be in Macau or anywhere in the world... All of them...

VROOOM
The signal is about to turn green, folks!
Green!


VRROOOOOM
BRAAAH
FLASH
ADVAN
YAMA
MOTO
51
PHENIX
ADVAN
ADVAN
Panasonic
70
Panasonic
KUROI RACING TEAM
GUNMA
80
PHENIX
POTENZA
PHENIX
POTENZA
POTENZA
6
45
8


anasonic
TODA
70
Panasonic
PHOENIX
POTENZA
FLASH


VRROOOOOM
ADVAN
山白動車
YAMA
MOTO
51
PHENIX
ADVAN
ADVAN
KUROI RACING TEAM
GUNMA
PHENIX
POTENZA
BRAAAH

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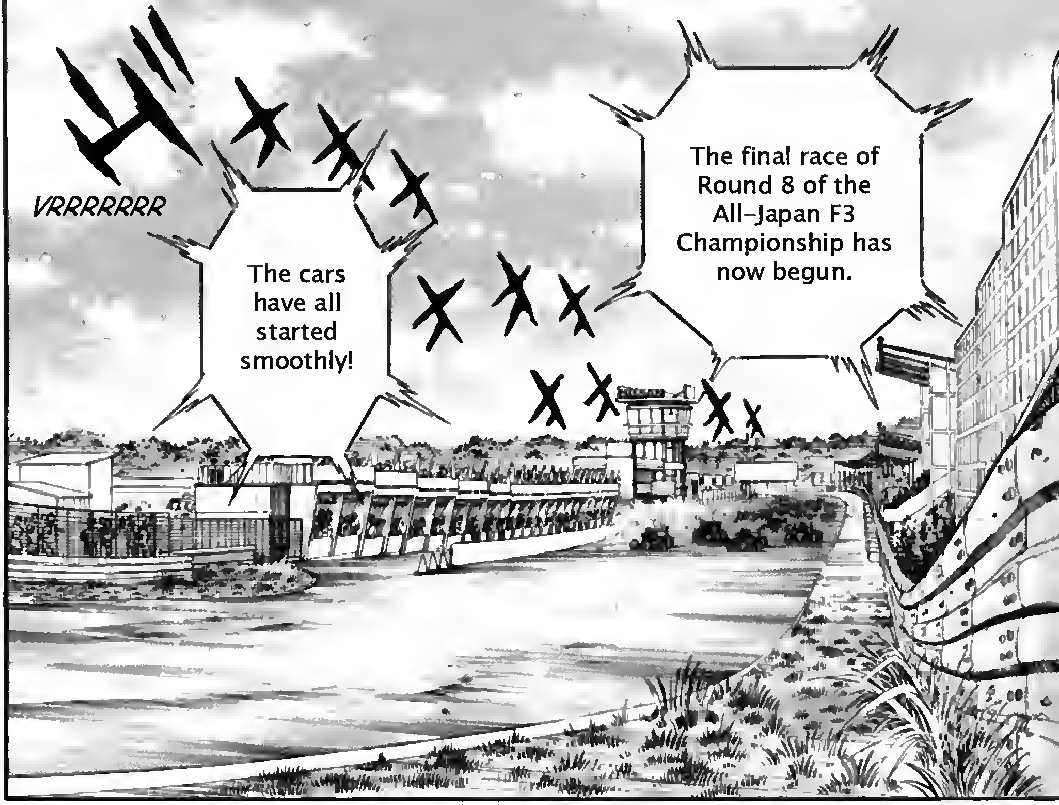
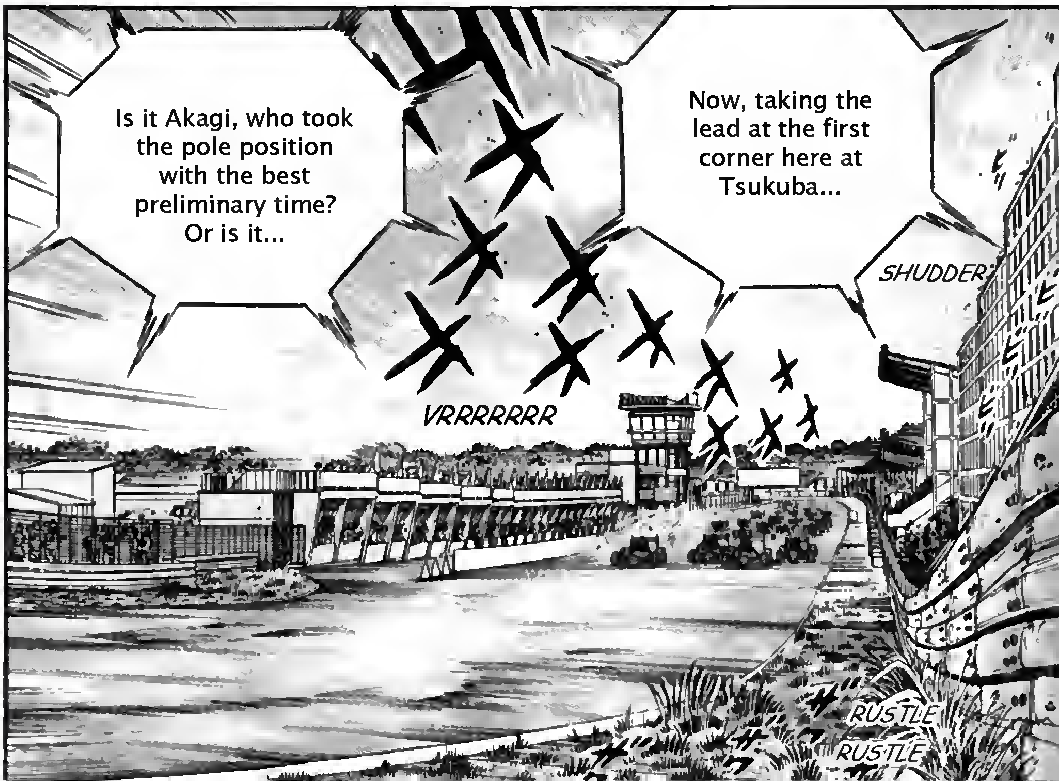
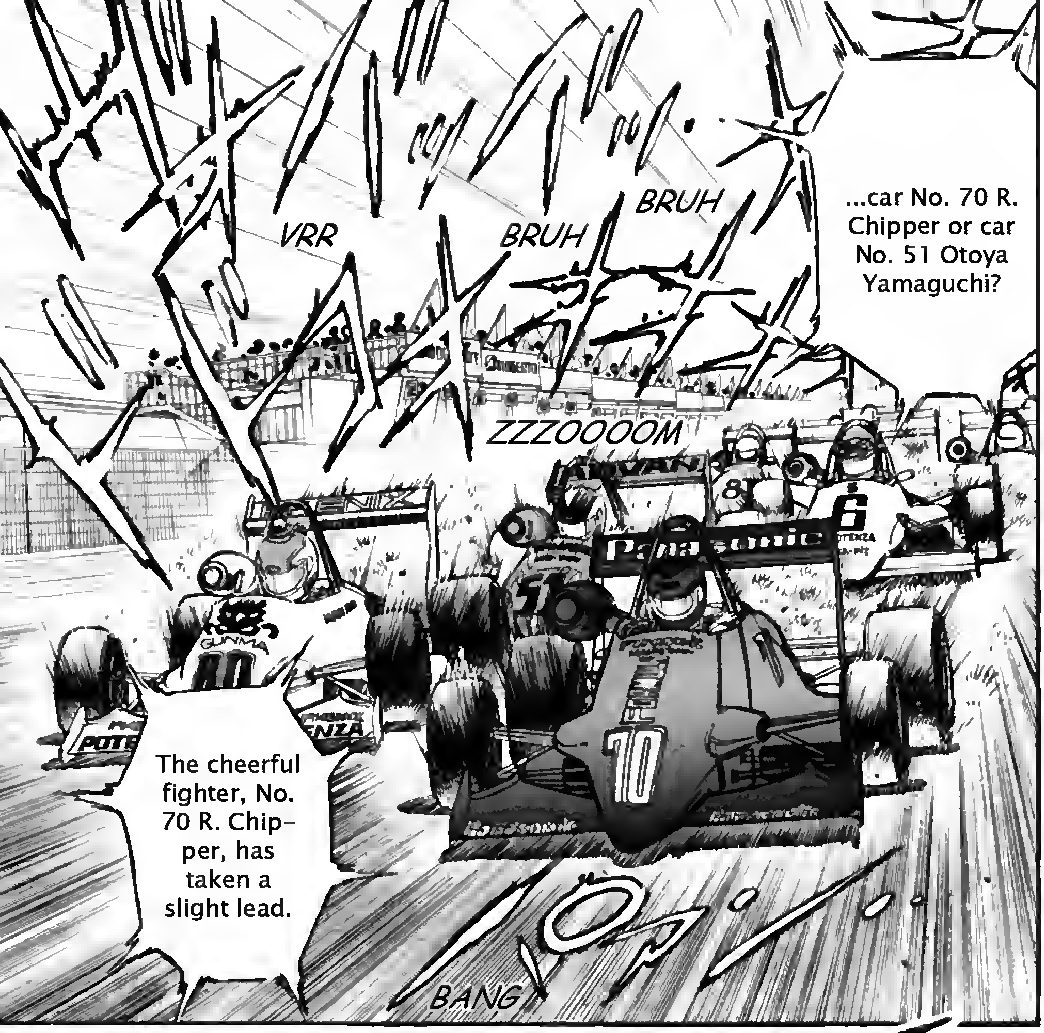
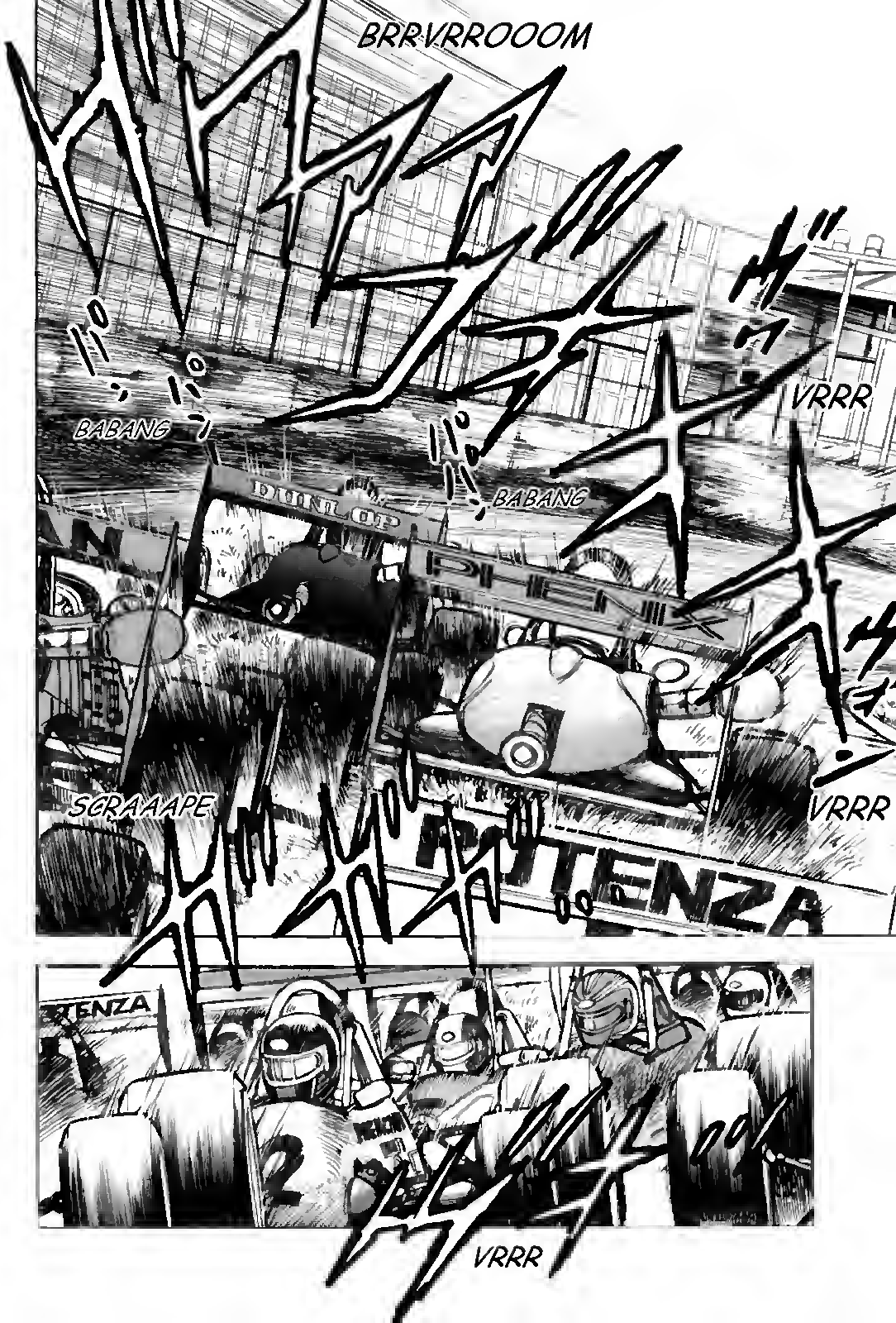
Chapter 5: Not Up to Snuff

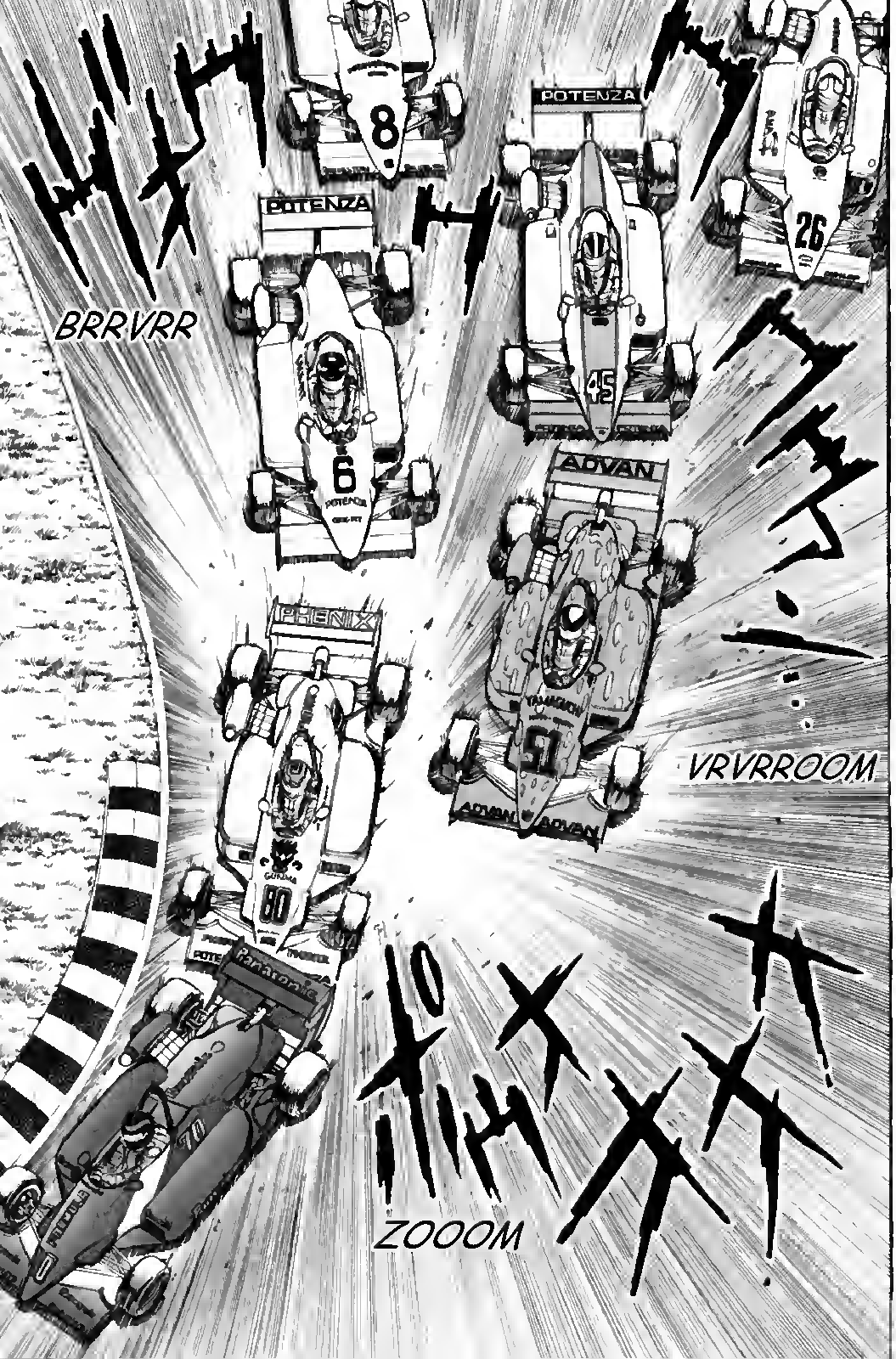

VRRRRRRR
The cars have all started smoothly!
The final race of Round 8 of the All-Japan F3 Championship has now begun.


Is it Akagi, who took the pole position with the best preliminary time? Or is it...
VRRRRRRR
Now, taking the lead at the first corner here at Tsukuba...
SHUDDER
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

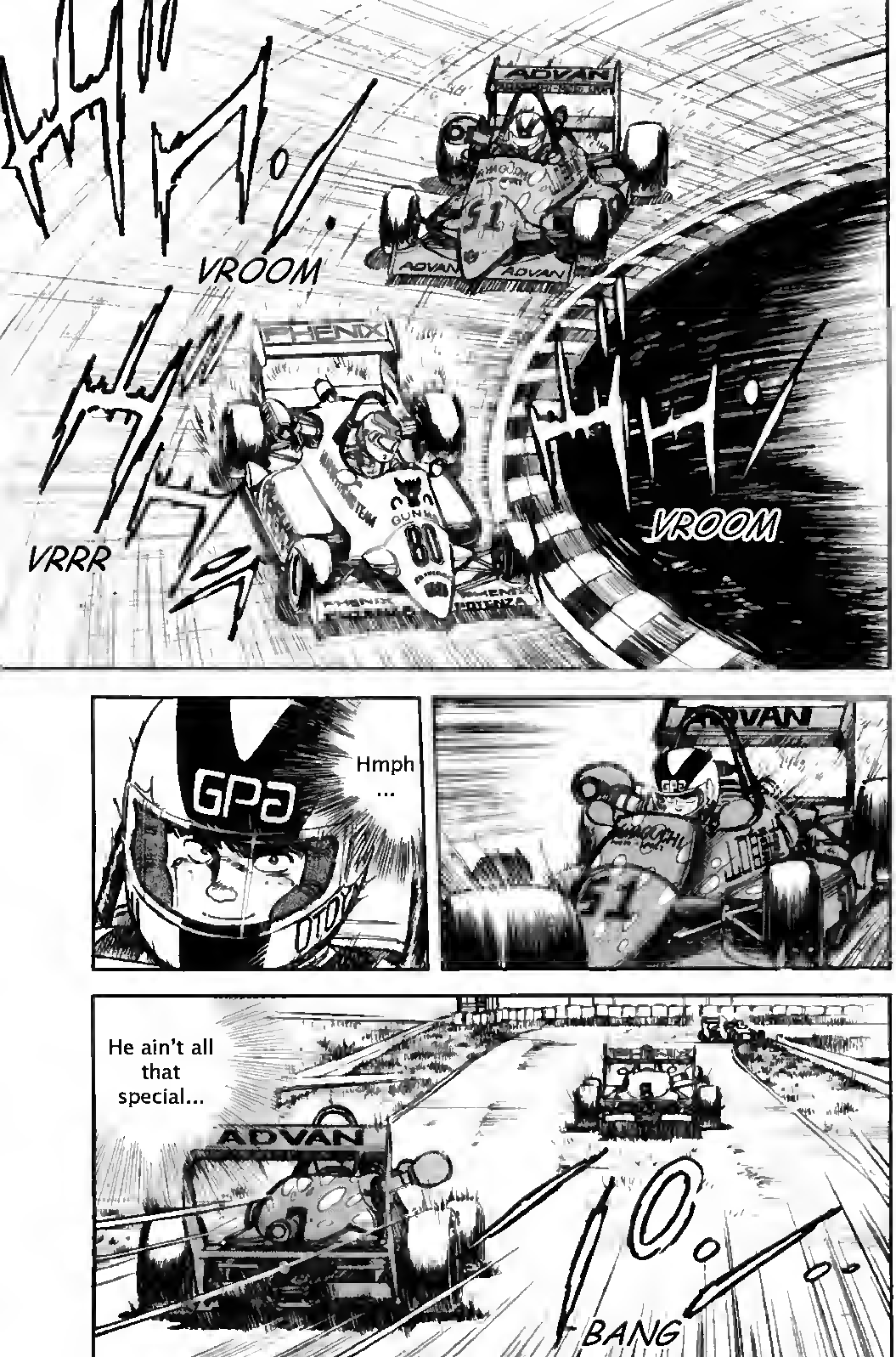

VRR
BRUH
BRUH
...car No. 70 R. Chipper or car No. 51 Otoya Yamaguchi?
ZZZOOOOM
Panasonic
The cheerful fighter, No. 70 R. Chipper, has taken a slight lead.
BANG

SHOOM


BRRVRROOOM
VRRR
BABANG
BABANG
DUNLOP
SCRAAAPE
VRRR
TENZA
TENZA
VRRR


BRRVRR
VRVRROOM
ZOOOM
POTENZA
ADVAN
PHENIX
Panasonic

True ...
Chipper had a real good start...
...
Hmm, second ...
5
4
3
And he's got a 6-win streak... It's nothing like how Goro was.
Taking pole position in the preliminary, getting into second at the start...
Still... He's pretty incredible...
...
...I think we might be asking too much of him.
... but...
Sure, Gunma doesn't seem very energetic right now...


VROOM
VRRR
VROOM
GPA
Hmph
...
ADVAN
He ain't all that special...
ADVAN
BANG

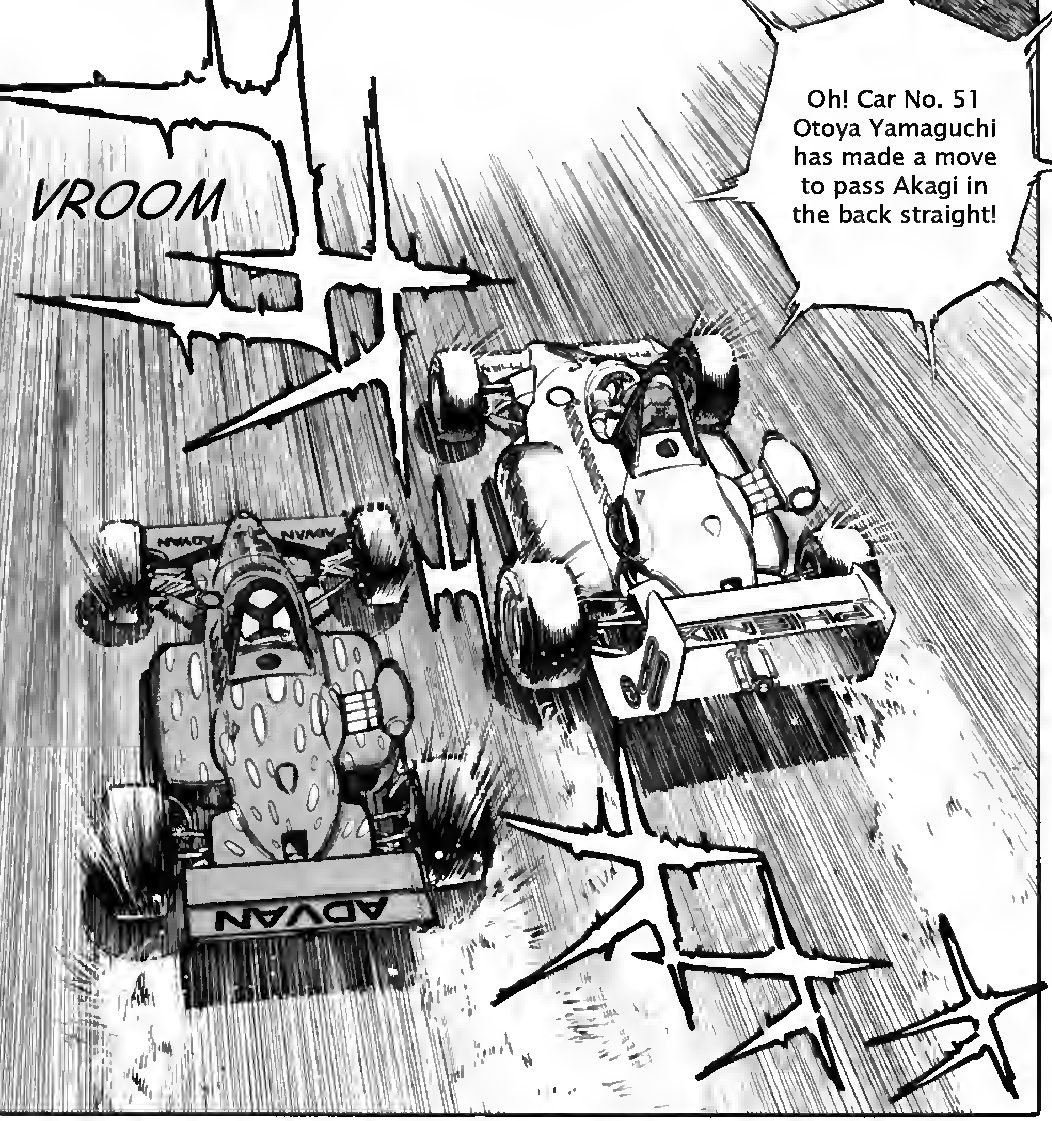
I can't tell...
ZOOOOM
Or is he just conserving his energy...?
YAMAGUCHI
Either way, I can pass him any time...
VRRRRRRR
The current leader is car No. 70 R. Chipper.
Second is No. 80 Gunma Akagi, third is No. 51 Otoya Yamaguchi.

I can see the whole course from here.
Tsu-kuba... It's been a while...
This is where I first met him, come to think of it...
PFFT
VRRROOOM
80
PHENIX
He's driving those laps so calmly...
It's weird though...
Has he matured ...?
BANG BABANG
ZOOOM
BANG BANG
ZOOOM
It's not like him.
Could it be...?

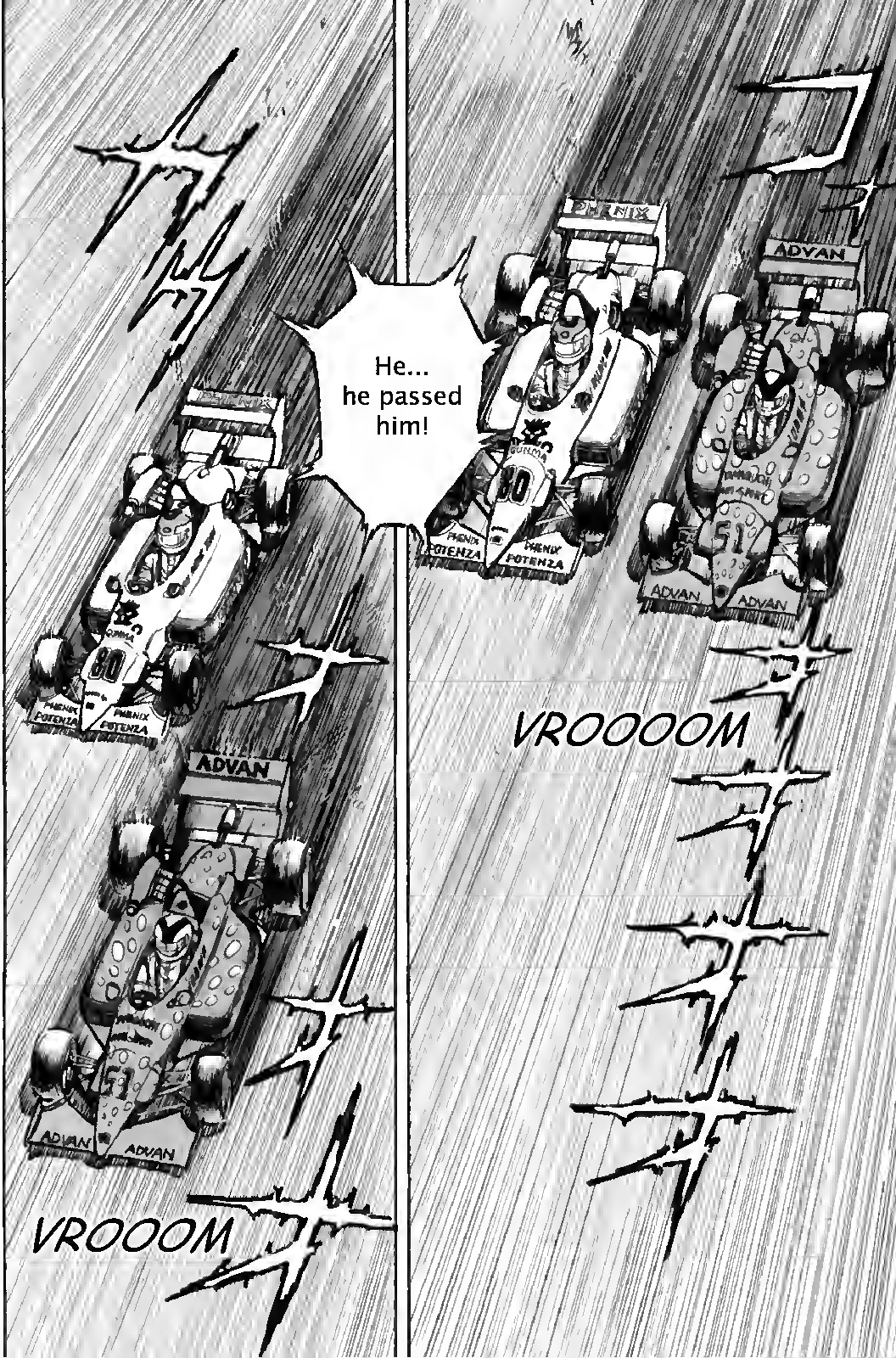
...we might be asking too much...
CLOP
True...
Maybe just like Alain Prost...
His records are proof of that, Kuroi...
He's one of the new generation of racers.
Y... yeah...
The reason he doesn't seem energetic might be because he's calmed down.
Or he might have changed...
That's not it.
...
We both have...
I guess I've gotten old...

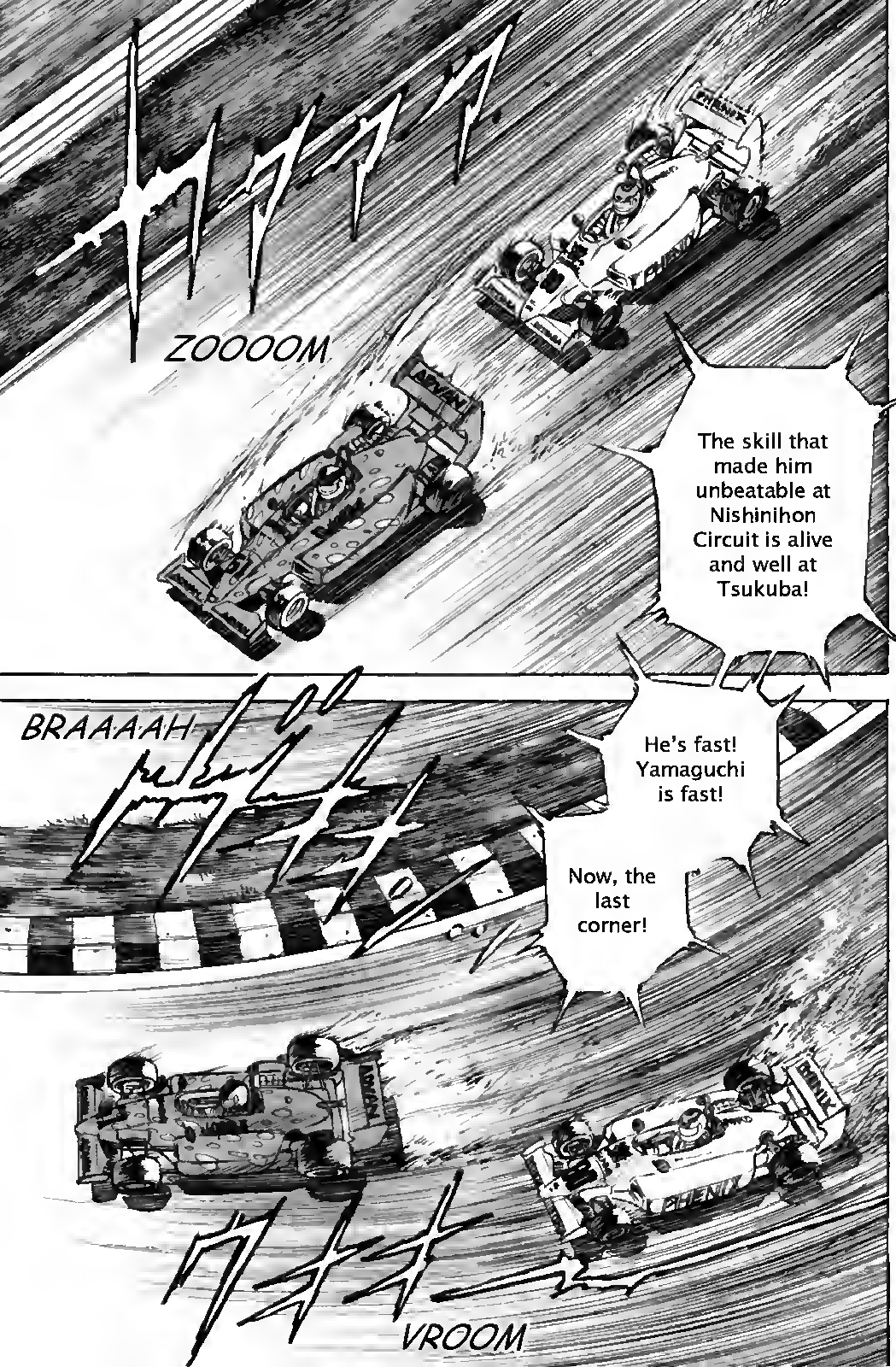
!
That Gunma there...
...that's not the Gunma I know.
BRAAAAAAAH
GUNMA
80
51
...but he won't be able to win internatio-nally...
At this rate, he can keep winnin' F3...

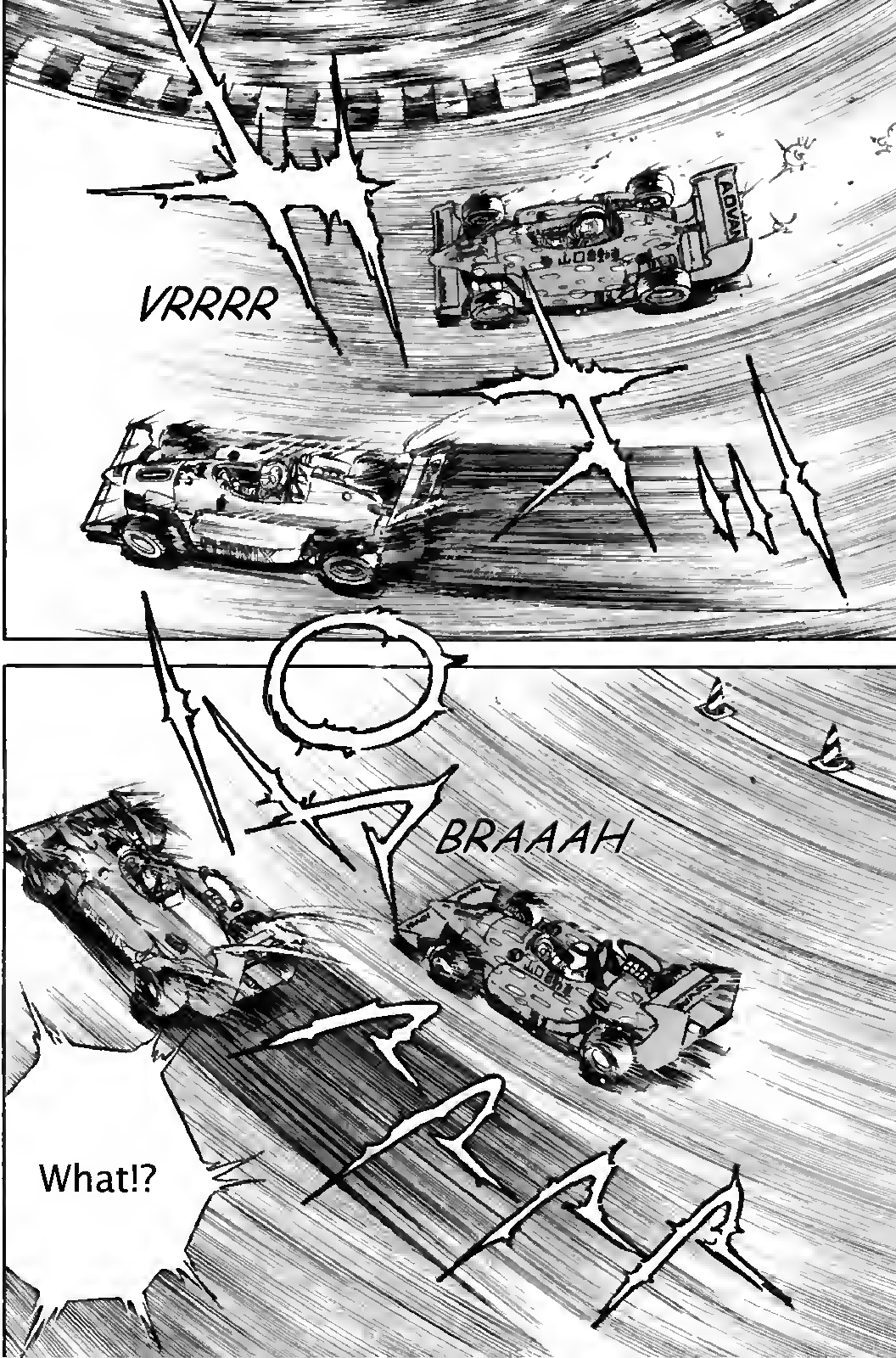
I'm sick and tired of following you around!
VRRRRRRR
That's it, I've had enough already!
...gets in front of me!
Ain't nobody ...
GRIP
WOOSH
KUROI RACING T

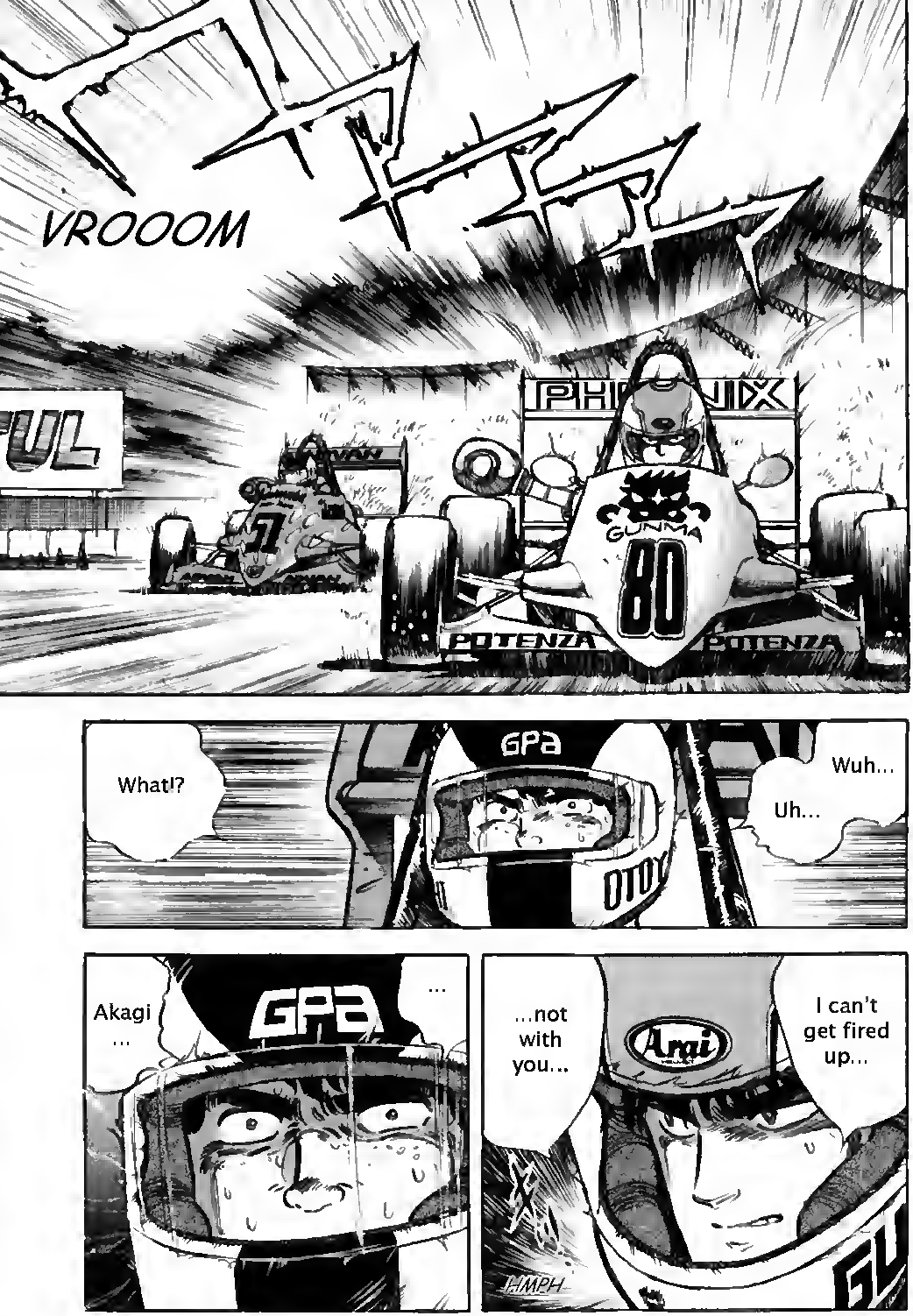

VROOM
Oh! Car No. 51 Otoya Yamaguchi has made a move to pass Akagi in the back straight!
ADVAN

RAAARGH!
OTOYA
SPORT


He... he passed him!
VROOOOM
VROOOM
ADVAN
PHOENIX POTENZA
80
51


ZOOOOM
The skill that made him unbeatable at Nishinihon Circuit is alive and well at Tsukuba!
BRAAAAH
He's fast! Yamaguchi is fast!
Now, the last corner!
VROOM


VRRRR
BRAAAH
What!?


VROOOM
PHOENIX
GUNMA
80
POTENZA
POTENZA
GPA
What!?
Wuh...
Uh...
GPA
Akagi
...
...
...not with you...
I can't get fired up...
Arai
HMPH

F

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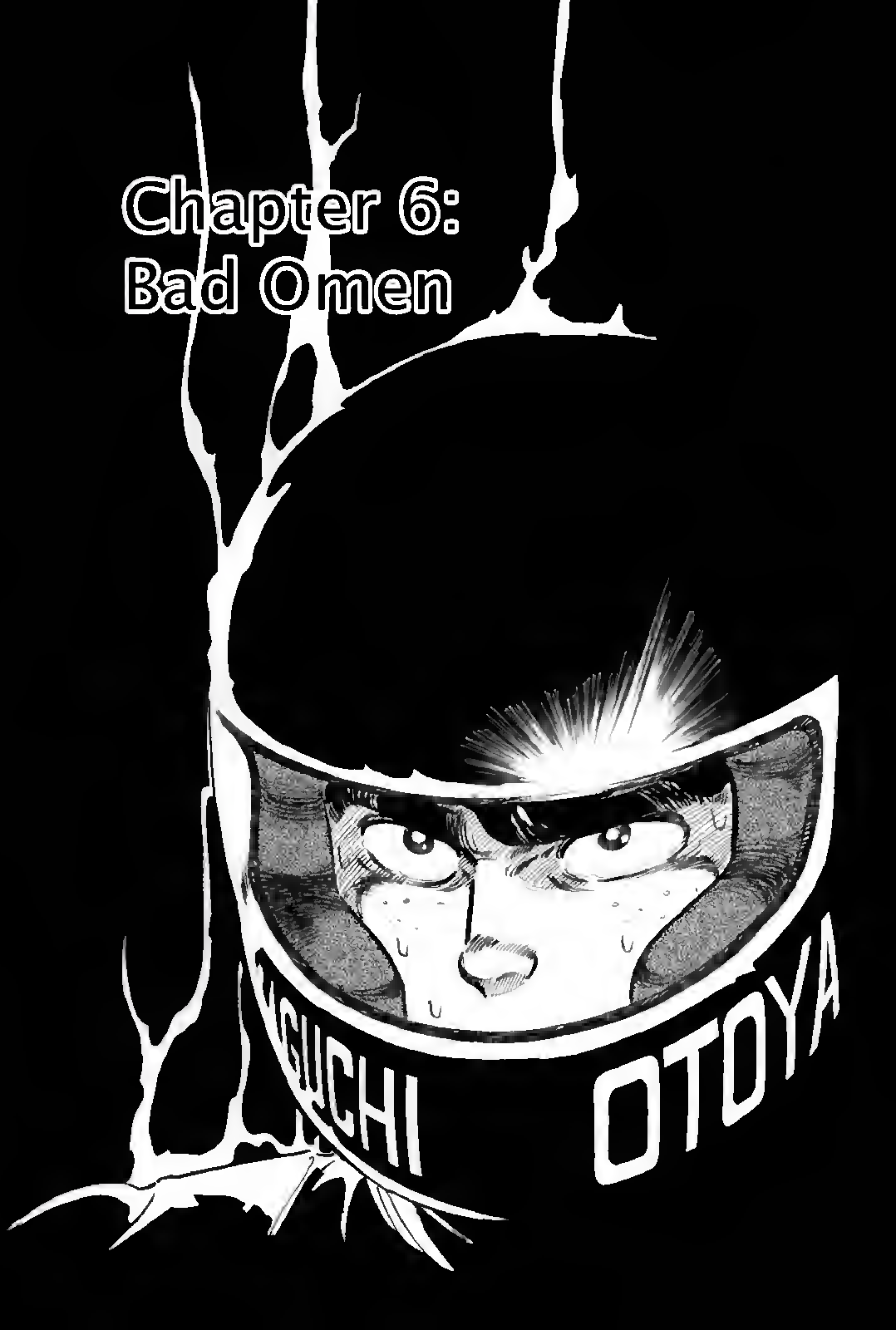
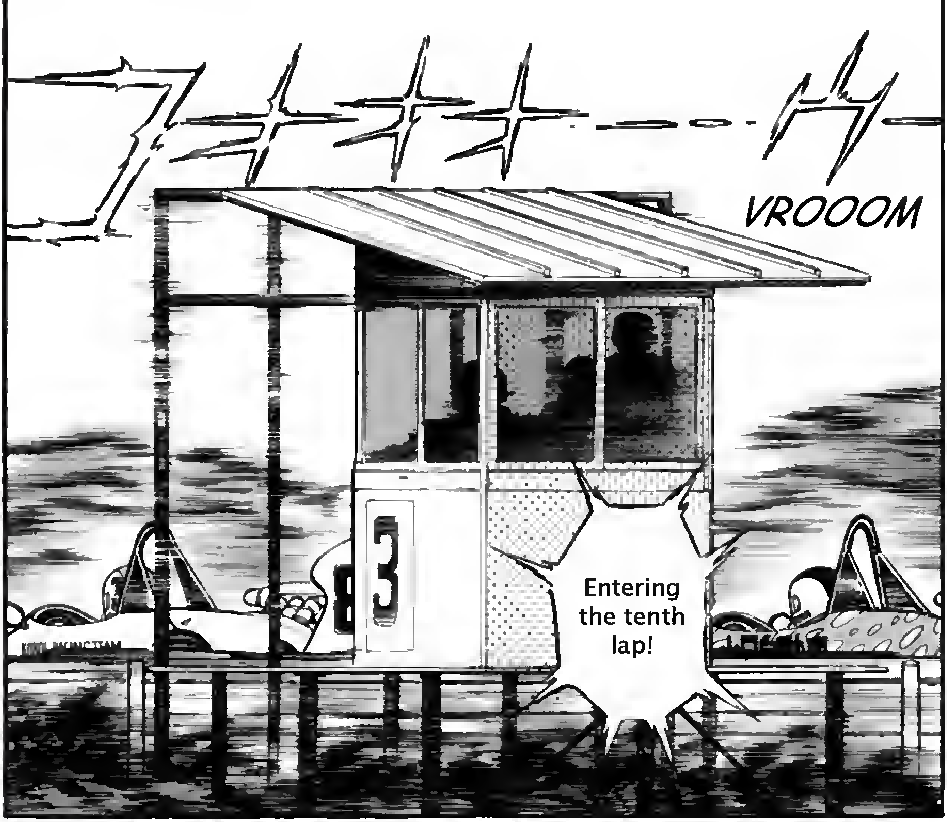
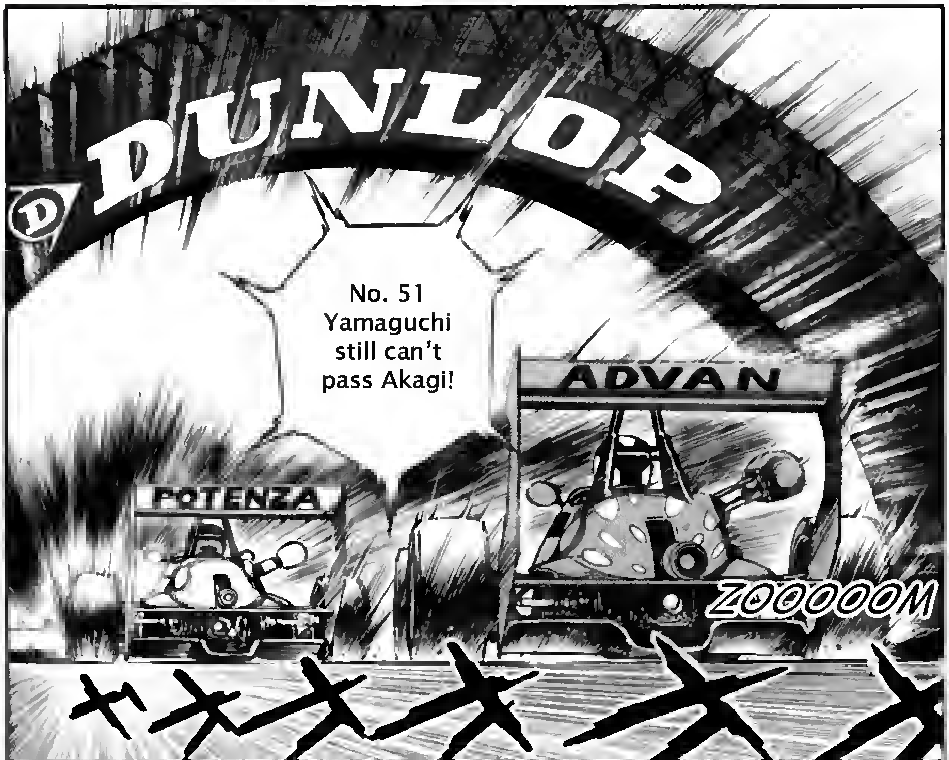
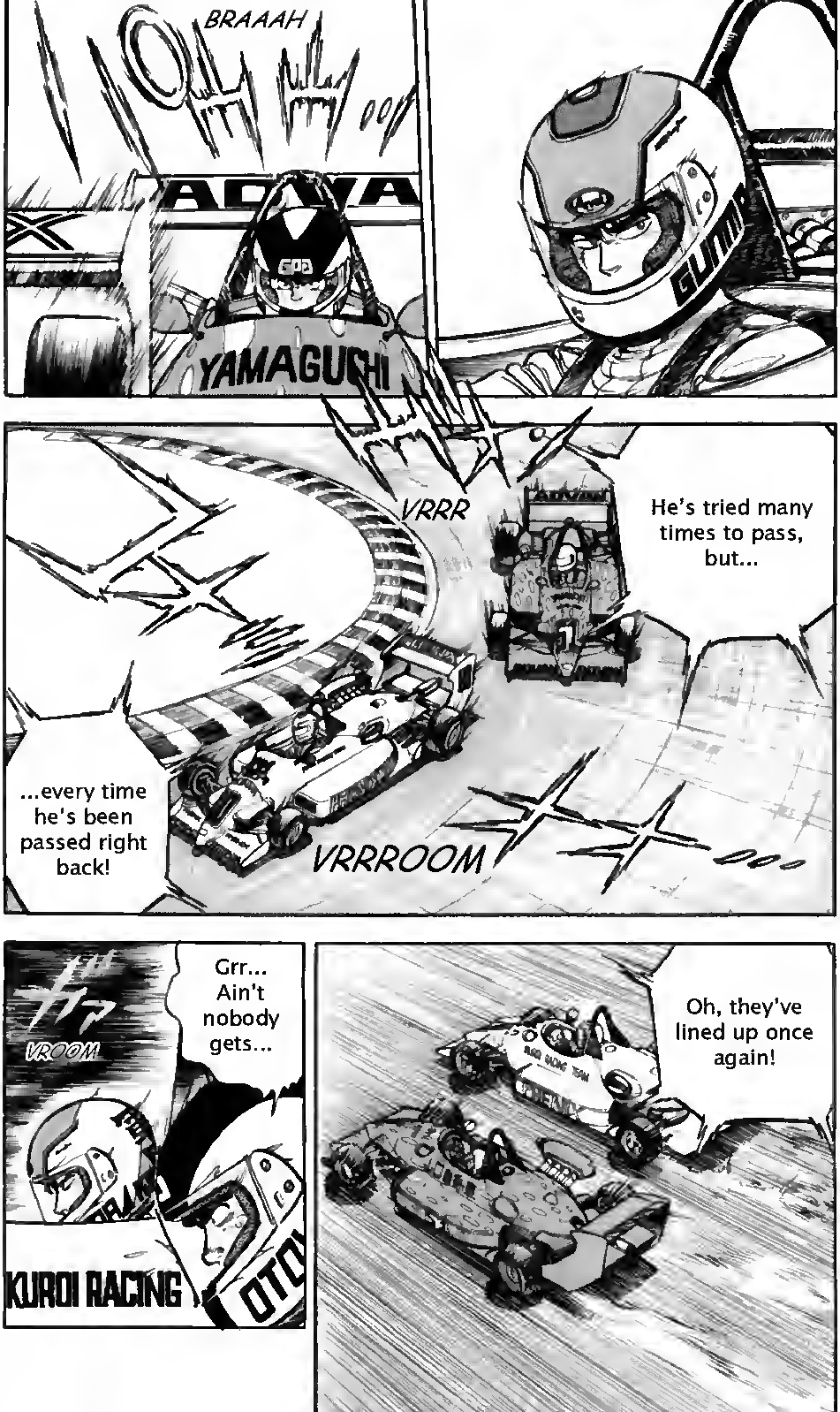
Chapter 6: Bad Omen



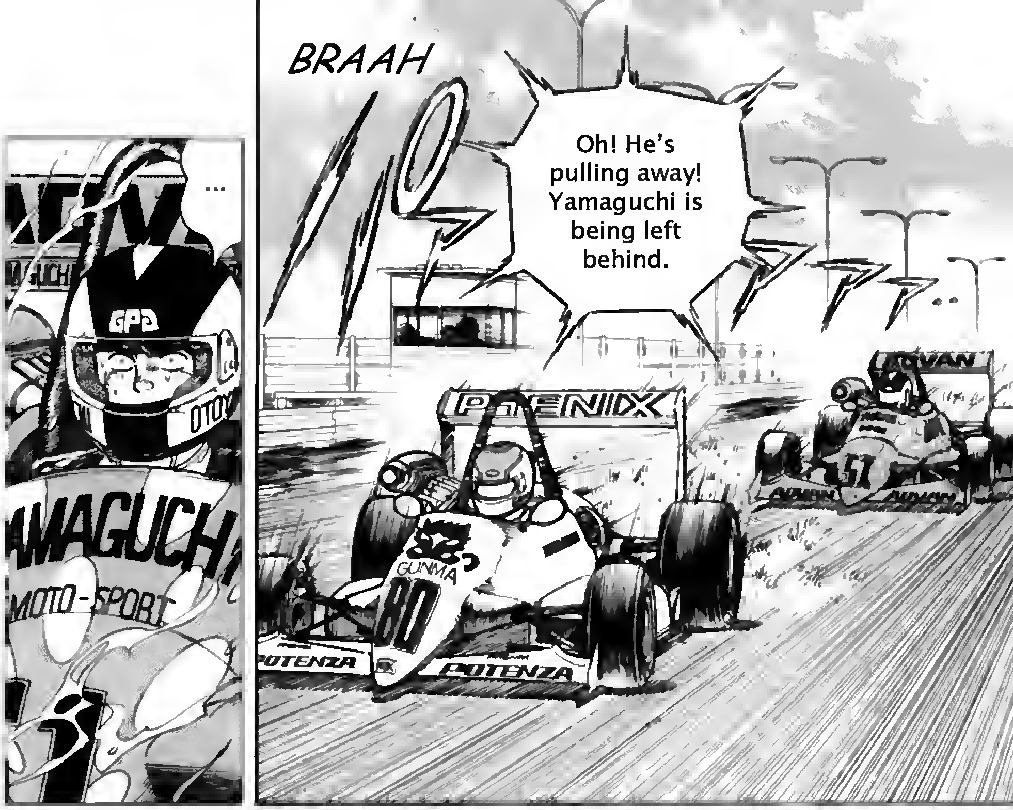

VROOOM
3
Entering the tenth lap!


DUNLOP
No. 51 Yamaguchi still can't pass Akagi!
ADVAN
POTENZA
ZOOOOOM

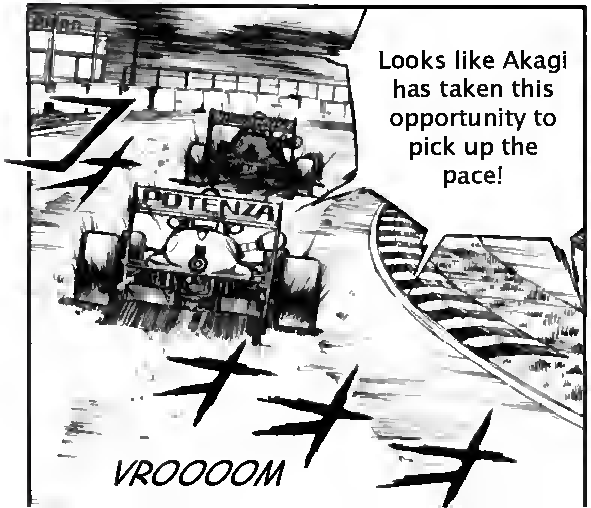

BRAAAH
YAMAGUCHI
VRRR
He's tried many times to pass, but...
...every time he's been passed right back!
VRRROOM
VROOM
Grr... Ain't nobody gets...
KUROI RACING
Oh, they've lined up once again!

GLARE
MAGUCHI
Huh...
NOBODY GETS IN FRONT OF ME!
GUNMA
OTOYA
... Tamotsu !
Do it...
GUN!
...

VROOOM
POTENZA

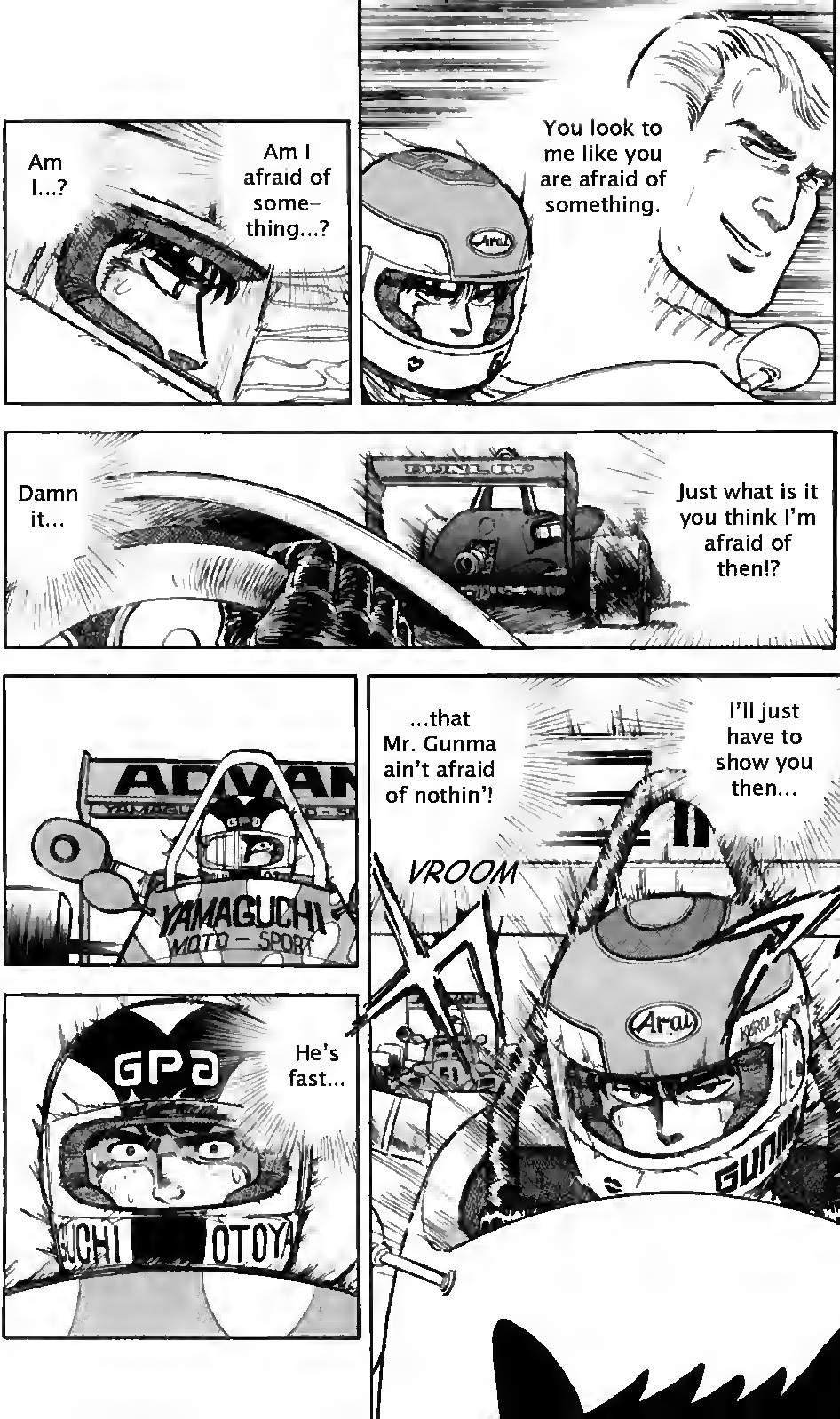

BRAAH
Oh! He's pulling away! Yamaguchi is being left behind.
...
GPD
YAMAGUCHI
MOTO-SPORT
PHENIX
GUNMA
80
POTENZA
IRVAN
51

Moron... You don't get away with stealin' a guy's catch-phrase...


Looks like Akagi has taken this opportunity to pick up the pace!
POTENZA
VROOOOM

GPD
GULP

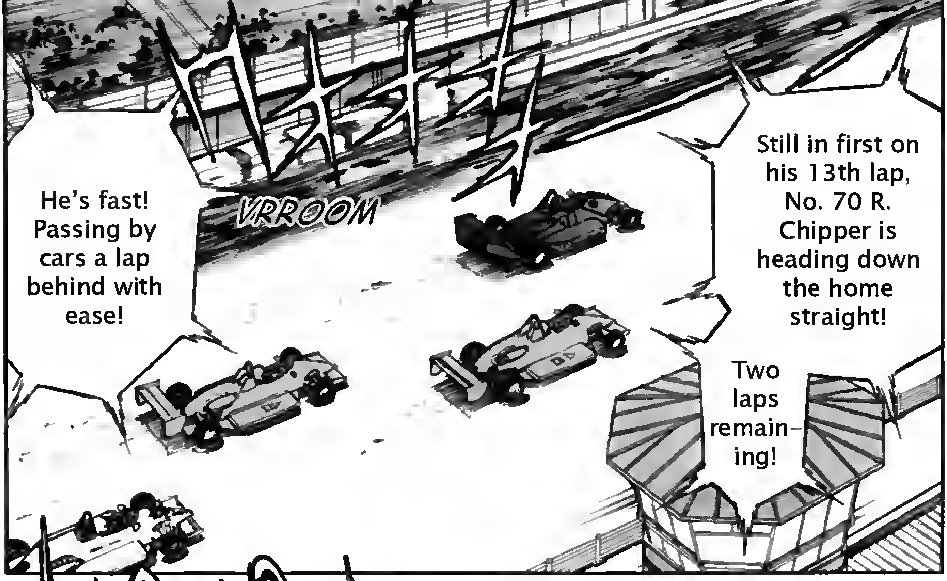
ZOOOOM
elf
PHENIX
GUNMA
00
He's moving in on R. Chipper!
Panasonic
POTENZA
SHOEI
BRAAH
TYRRELL
70
Panasonic
VROOOM
POTENZA
ZOOOM

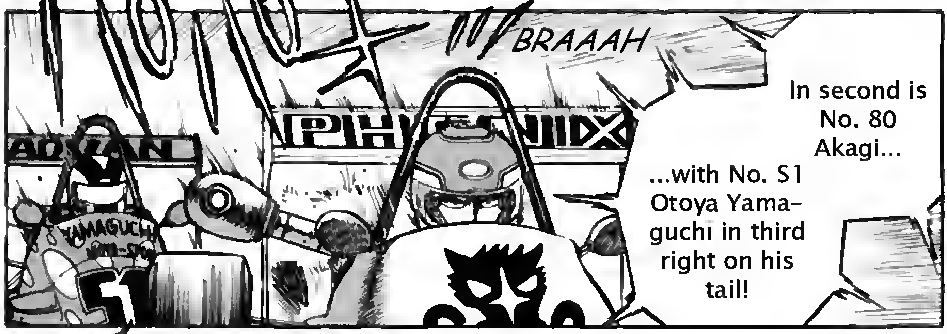

Am I...?
Am I afraid of some-thing...?
You look to me like you are afraid of something.
Damn it...
Just what is it you think I'm afraid of then!?
YAMAGUCHI
MOTO – SPORT
He's fast...
...that Mr. Gunma ain't afraid of nothin'!
I'll just have to show you then...
VROOM

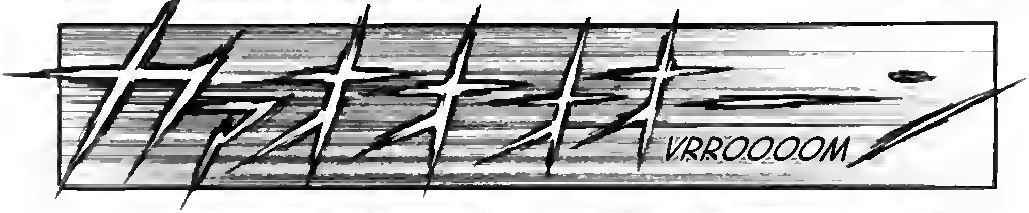
No! That's my line!
SHOE!
SHOE!
Wow! Akagi has forced his way into the inside!
PHENIX
PHENIX
PHENIX
ZOOM
SCREET
Wha...
KAGI
TWITCH

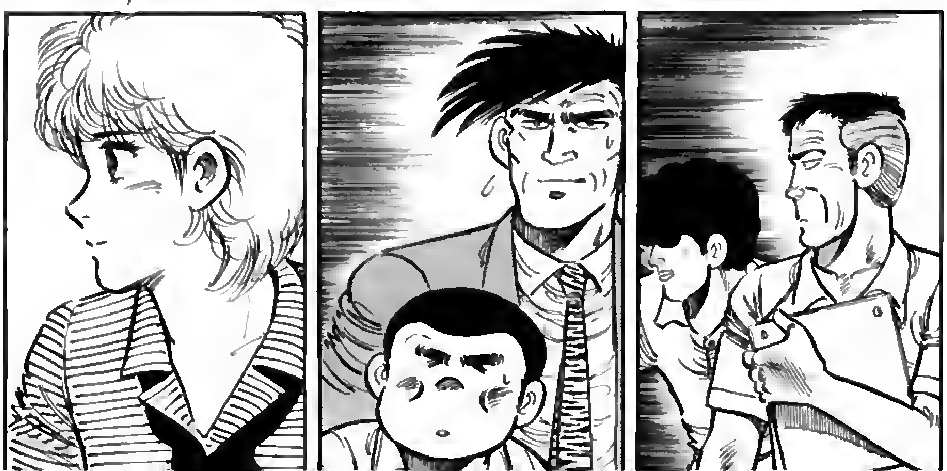
Wh... What the...!?
Close, but Akagi has decided not to push it and lets Chipper go ahead!
See, I knew you were afraid!
POTENZA
BRAAAAH
...that's not good at all...
No, Yasu...
That's good, there's no reason to push too hard!
...
He got scared and chickened out...
He didn't make a calculated decision to withdraw!
Yeah, but...

You chickened out just now!
Damn you, you went and chickened out...
GLK
VRRR
ADVAN
YAMAGUCHI
Here comes Yamaguchi in third place, going to pass Akagi on the outside in the hairpin!
ZOOOM
POTENZA
Not a chance!


VRROOM
He's fast! Passing by cars a lap behind with ease!
Still in first on his 13th lap, No. 70 R. Chipper is heading down the home straight!
Two laps remaining!

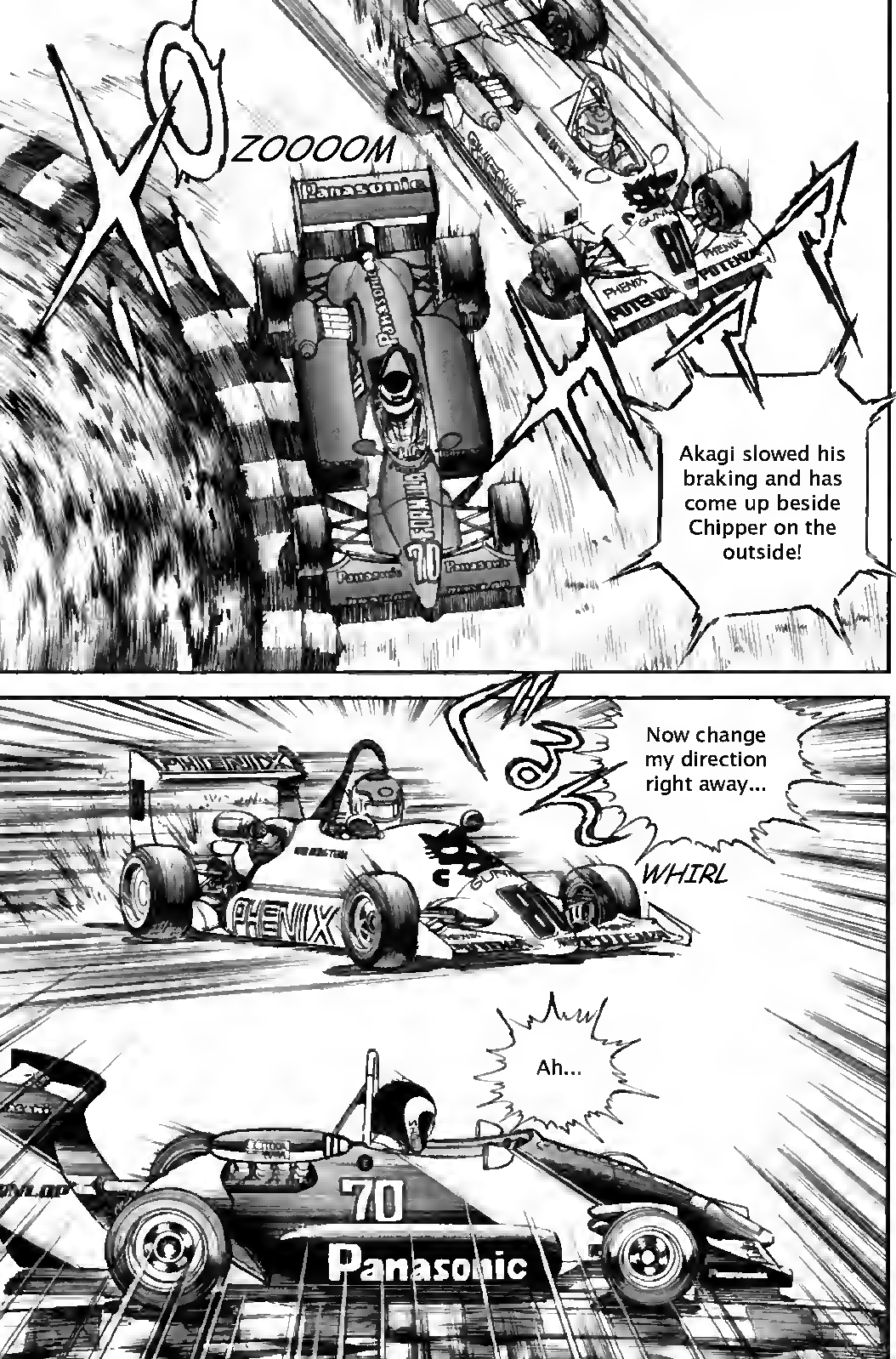

BRAAAH
In second is No. 80 Akagi...
...with No. S1 Otoya Yamaguchi in third right on his tail!

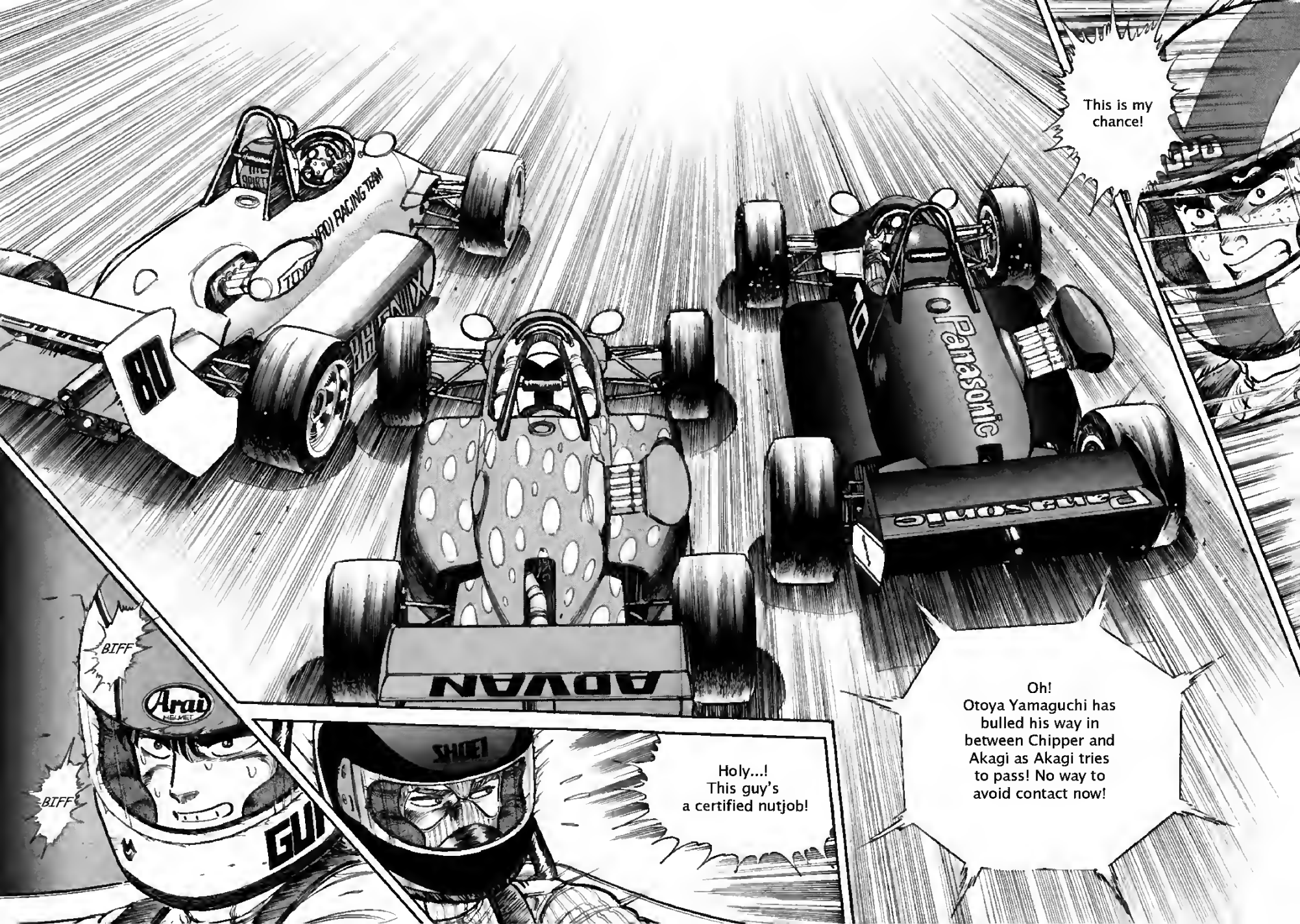

VRROOOOM

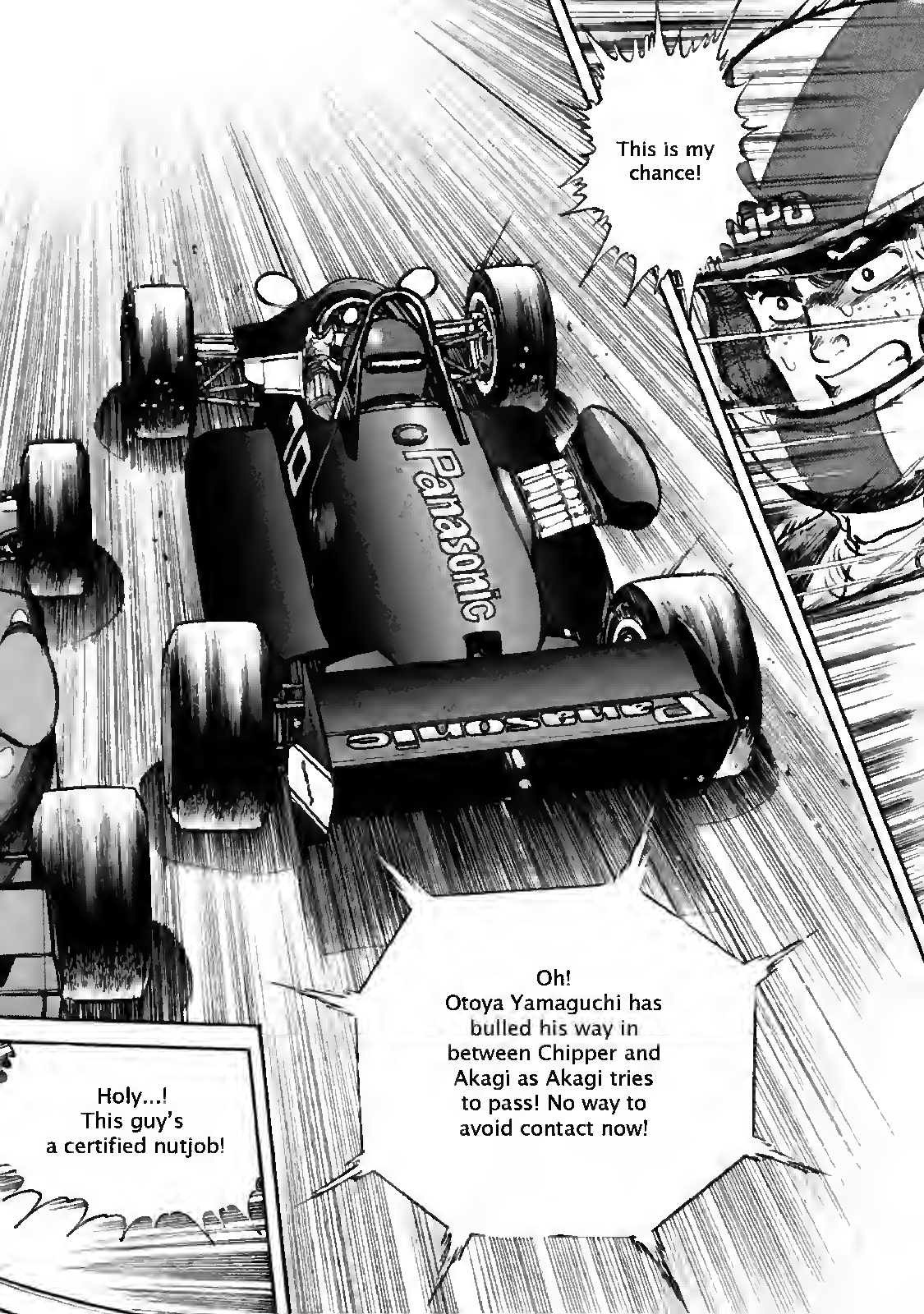


How pathetic you are, Gunma...
How pathetic ...
Damn ...
Hold off on brakin' as long as possible...
I'll make a move at the 2nd hairpin.
...then pass on the outside in a flash...
VRRR
CLUNK
Just you watch ...
Hmph ...
SHOEI
BRAAAH
GUNMA
PHOENIX
BANG BANG
Don't you vanish on me again...
Okay ...

He's going for it! But too bad, the inside is all mine!
VROOM VROOM
BANG BANG
ZOOOOM
Don't vanish on me!
CPD
AMAGUCI
POTENZA
Go!


ZOOOOM
Panasonic
70
Akagi slowed his braking and has come up beside Chipper on the outside!
Now change my direction right away...
WHIRL
PHENIX
Ah...
70
Panasonic


This is my chance!
80
PHOENIX
Panasonic
ADVAN
Oh! Otoya Yamaguchi has bulled his way in between Chipper and Akagi as Akagi tries to pass! No way to avoid contact now!
BIFF
BIFF
Arai
SHOEI
Holy...! This guy's a certified nutjob!

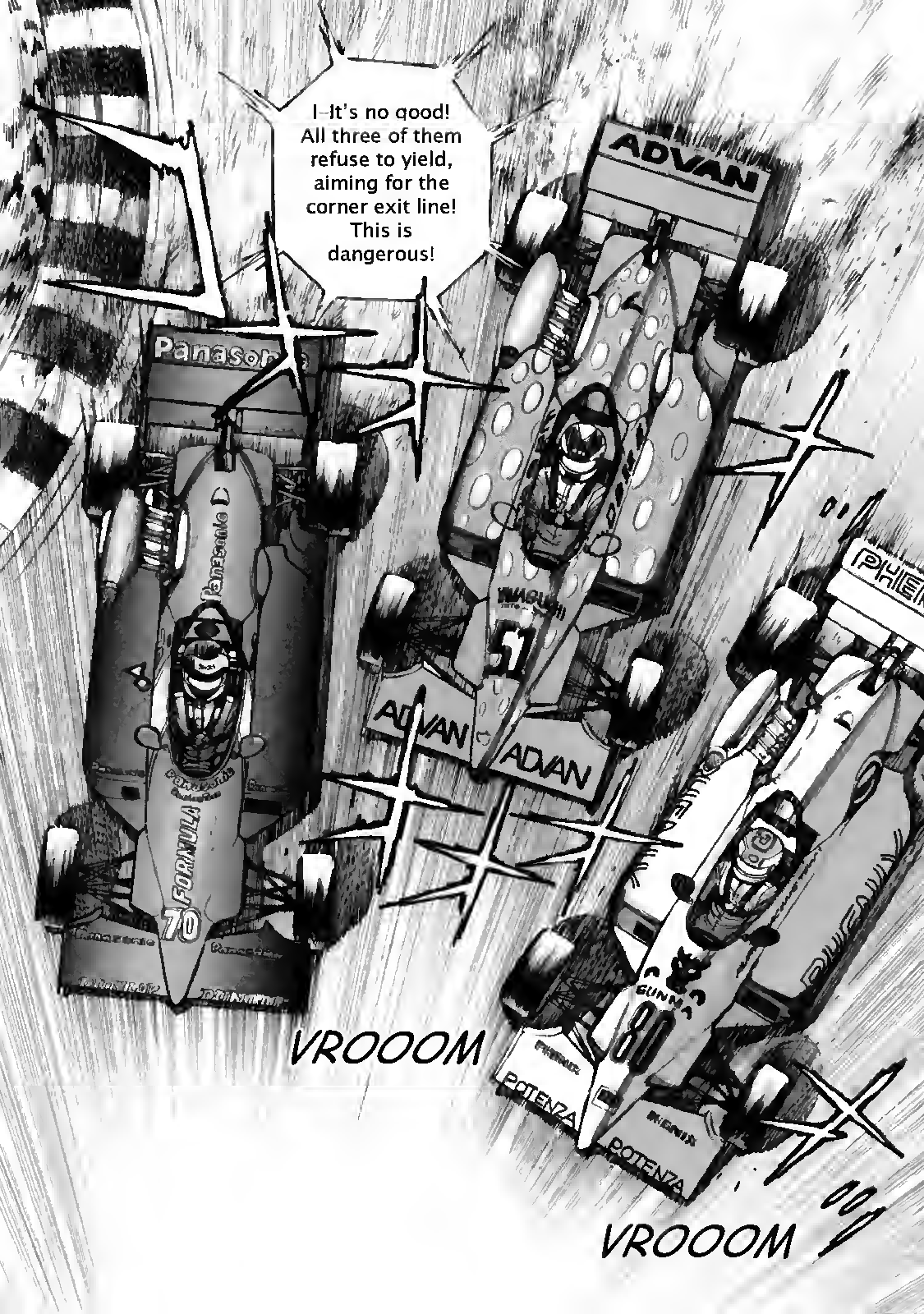

This is my chance!
Panasonic
Oh! Otoya Yamaguchi has bulled his way in between Chipper and Akagi as Akagi tries to pass! No way to avoid contact now!
Holy...! This guy's a certified nutjob!

80
TOM
PHOENIX
BIFF
Arai
HELMET
BIFF
SHOEI

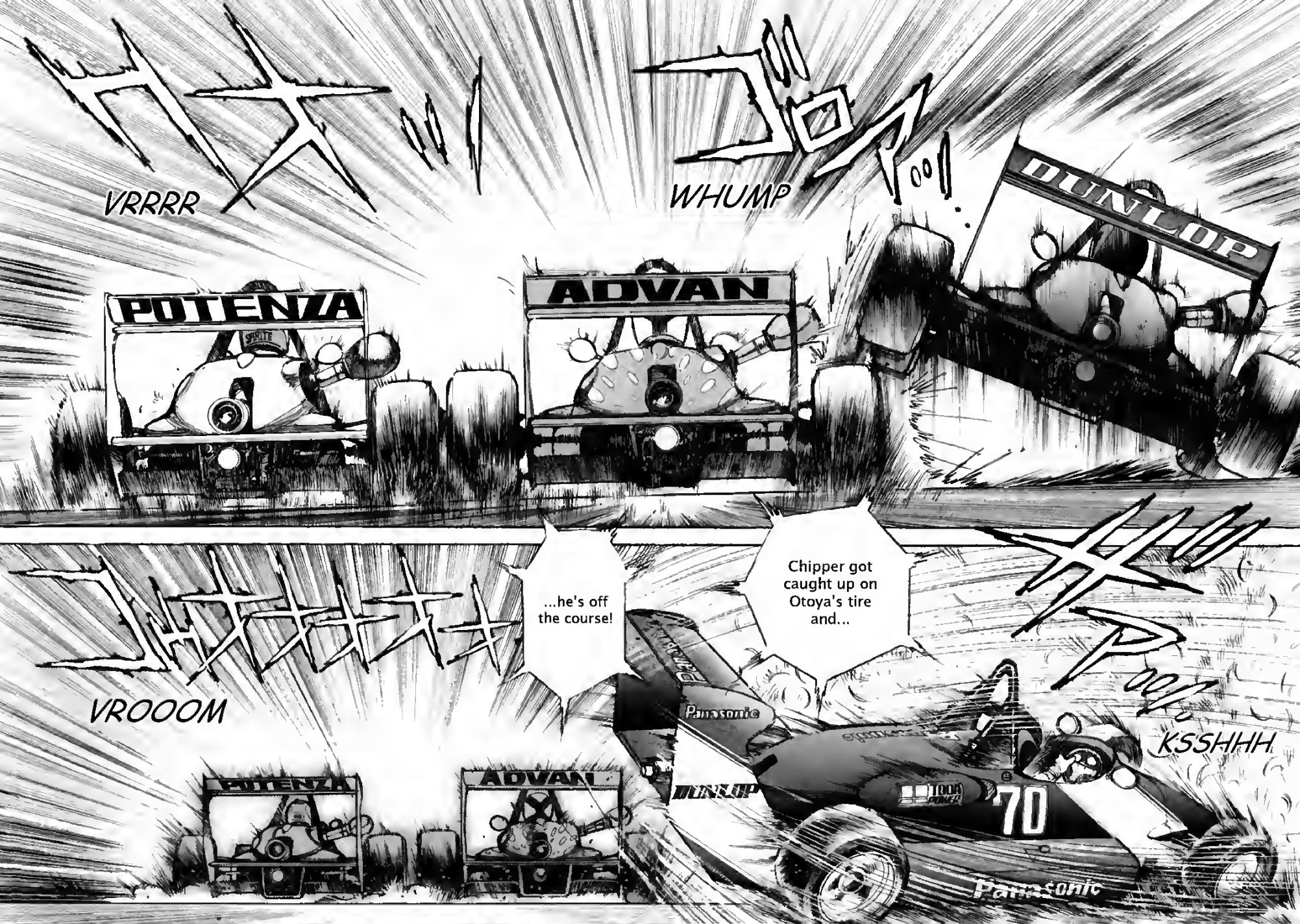
F

VOL.9

Chapter 7: Stolen Victory

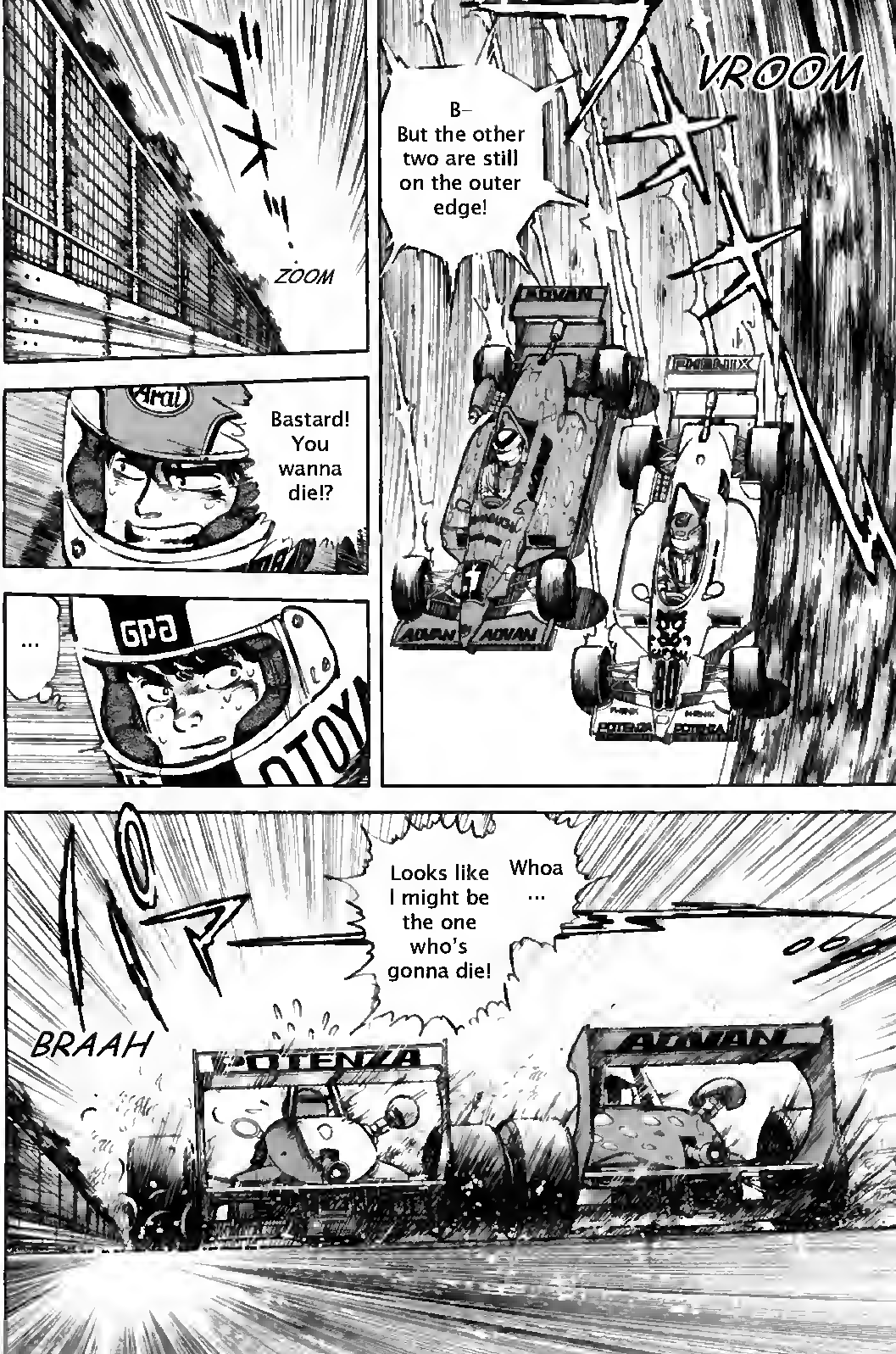

I-It's no good! All three of them refuse to yield, aiming for the corner exit line! This is dangerous!
ADVAN
51
70
80
VROOOM
VROOOM

Hmph, reckless bastard!
This is my chance, I'm going take the lead!
D-Damn you, Otoya! Give it up already!
OTOYA
BUMP
STOMP
CLENCH
BRAAAH
Noooo!
THUNK

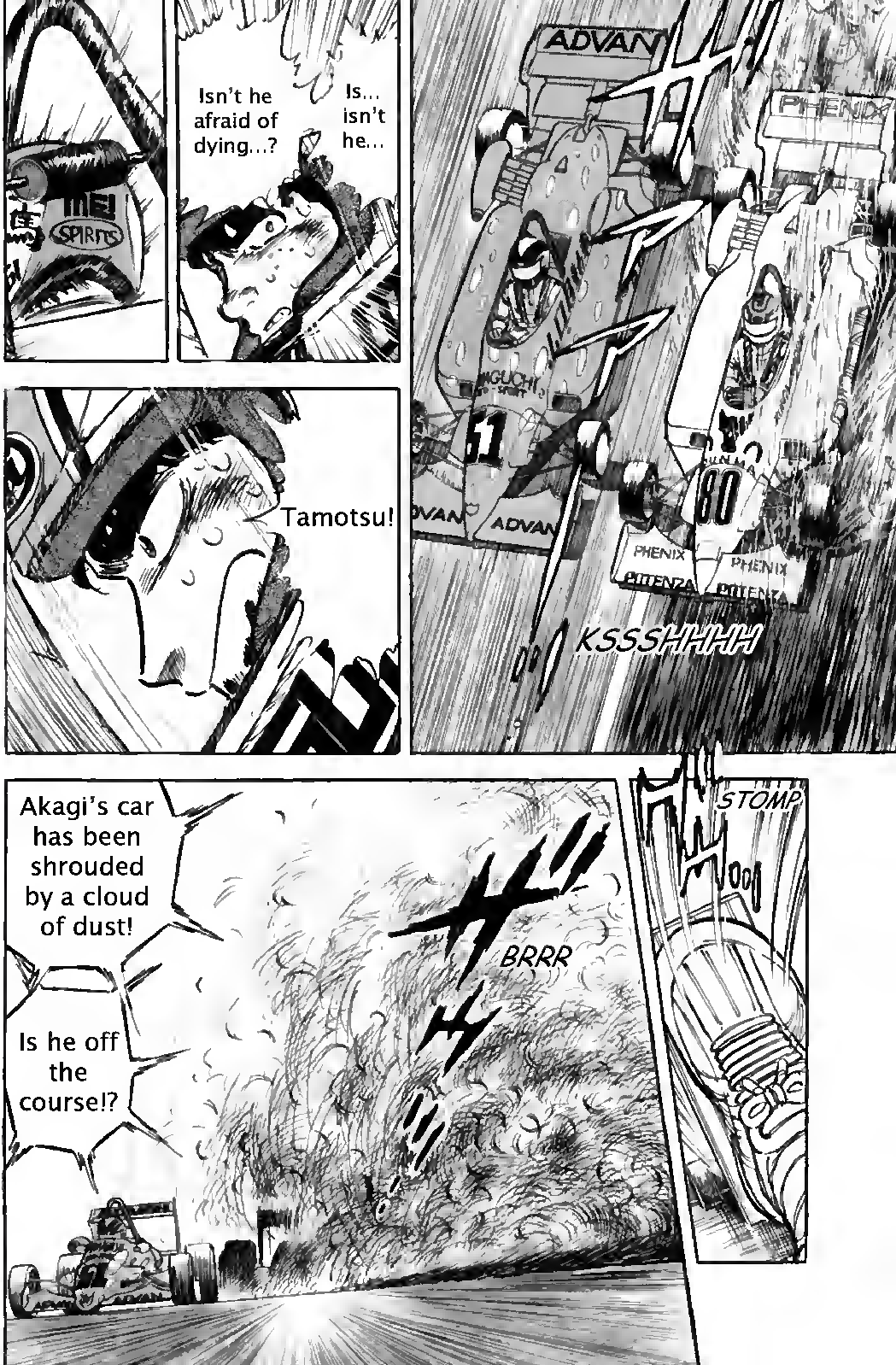

VRRRR
WHUMP
POTENZA
ADVAN
DUNLOP
...he's off the course!
Chipper got caught up on Otoya's tire and...
VROOOM
KSSHHH
Panasonic
70

ゴロ
WHUMP
DUNLOP
VAN
Chipper got caught up on Otoya's tire and...
KSSHHH
Panasonic
DUNLOP
70
Panasonic

VRRRR
POTENZA
SPIRITS
VROOOM
...he's off the course!
POTENZA
ADVAN

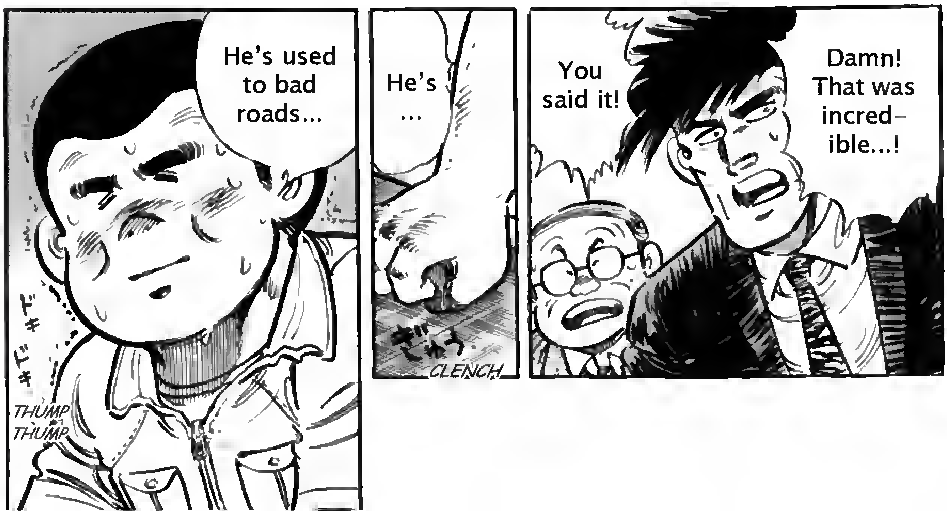

ZOOM
VROOM
B–
But the other two are still on the outer edge!
Arai
Bastard! You wanna die!?
GP3
...
Looks like I might be the one who's gonna die!
Whoa ...
BRAAH
POTENZA
ADVAN

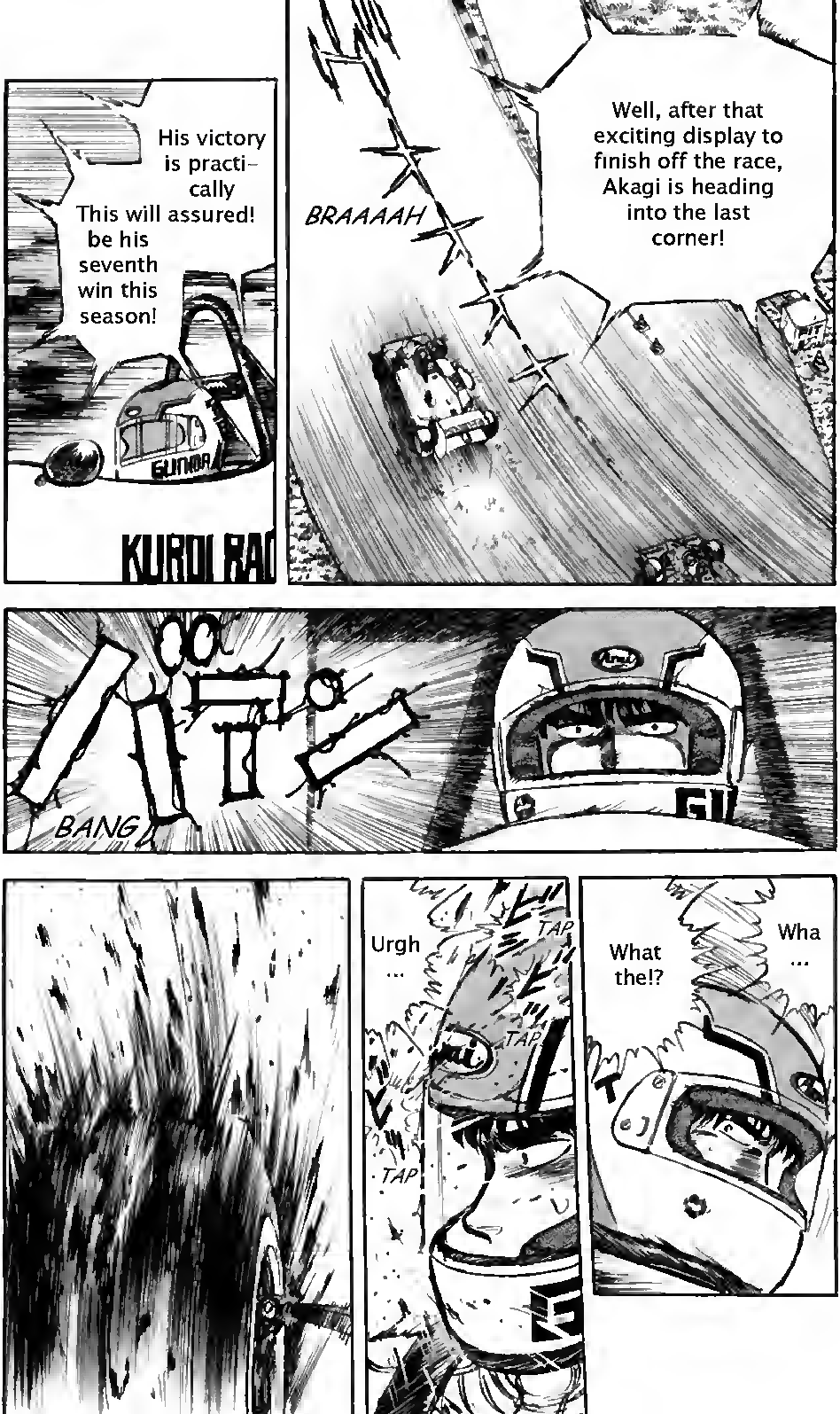
GRIND
I ain't touching that brake!
I...
GLARE
BRRRR
...one of us will crash.
If we keep this up...
Look... There's no white ghost!
SUOMA KAGI


SPIRITS
Isn't he afraid of dying...?
Is... isn't he...
ADVAN
PHENIX
KSSSHHHH
Tamotsu!
Akagi's car has been shrouded by a cloud of dust!
Is he off the course!?
BRRR
STOMP

!!
WOOOMP
ADVAN
PHENIX
KUMI RACING TEAM
10

Car No. 80 Gunma Akagi, despite barely staying on course has managed to pass Yamaguchi!
He did it!
Normally the tires would catch and spin out!
Wh- What incred- ible control!
ZOOOOOM
GUNMA
80
51
HONDA
NSX
PROTENZA


He's used to bad roads...
He's ...
You said it!
Damn! That was incred- ible...!
THUMP THUMP
CLENCH

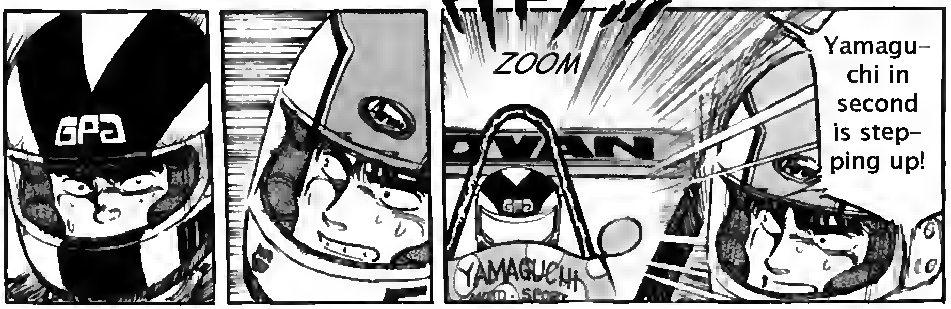

His victory is practically assured! This will be his seventh win this season!
KUROI RAC
BRAAAAH
Well, after that exciting display to finish off the race, Akagi is heading into the last corner!
BANG!
Urgh ...
TAP
TAP
TAP
What the!?
Wha ...

BAWUMPWUMP
PHENIX
GUNMA
80
KUROBA RACING
NGK
PHENIX
PHENIX
POTENZA
POTENZA

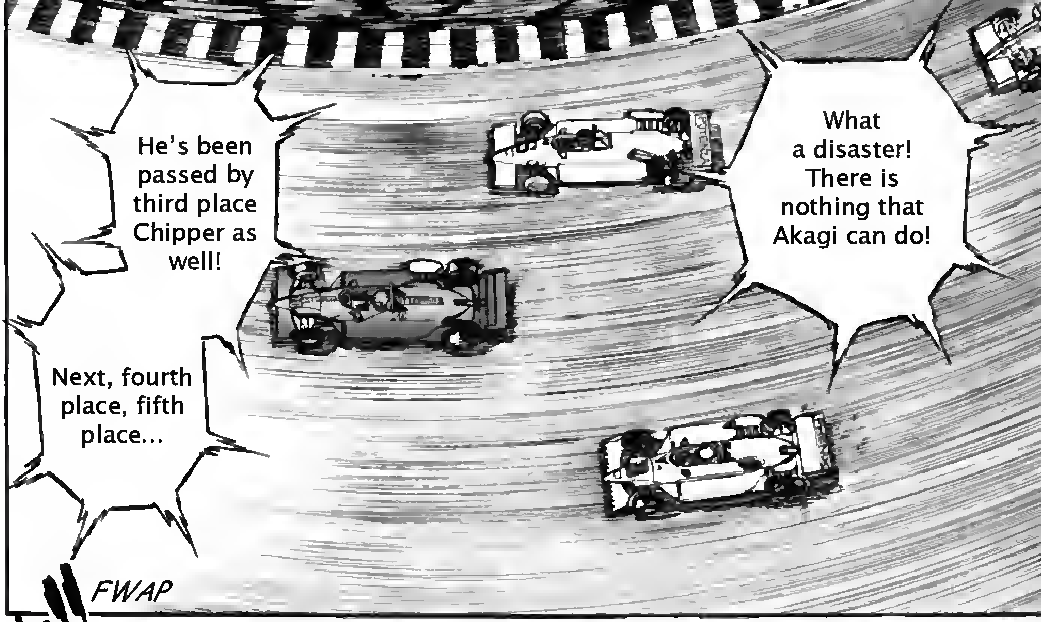
MUTTER
Wh...
What a tragedy! At the last moment the tire of Akagi's car has burst!

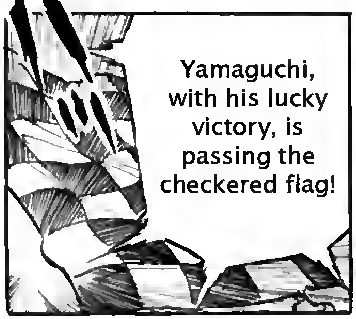
ZSSHHH
Oh crap! My tire!
POTENZA

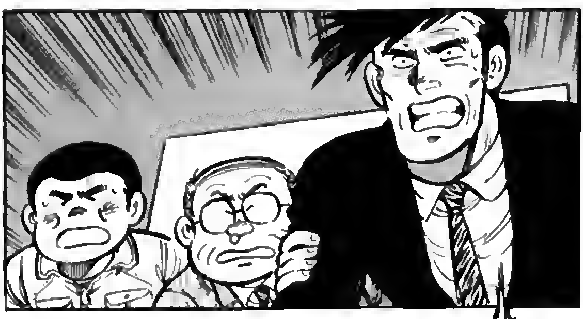
ZOOM
SCRAAAPE
It's no good! His car is swerving back and forth!
All he can do is keep it from spinning!
POTENZA
POTENZA


ZOOM
Yamaguchi in second is stepping up!
YAMAGUCHI

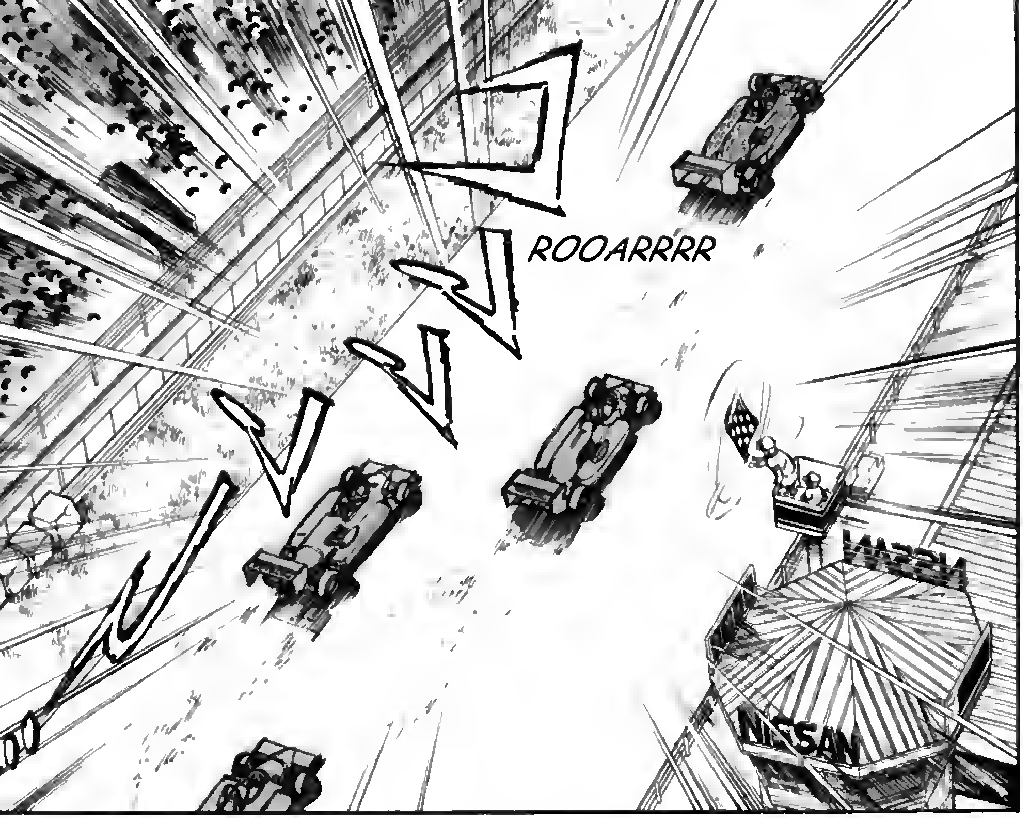
BRAAAH
Akagi's been passed!
HEH!


He's been passed by third place Chipper as well!
What a disaster! There is nothing that Akagi can do!
Next, fourth place, fifth place...
FWAP


Yamaguchi, with his lucky victory, is passing the checkered flag!

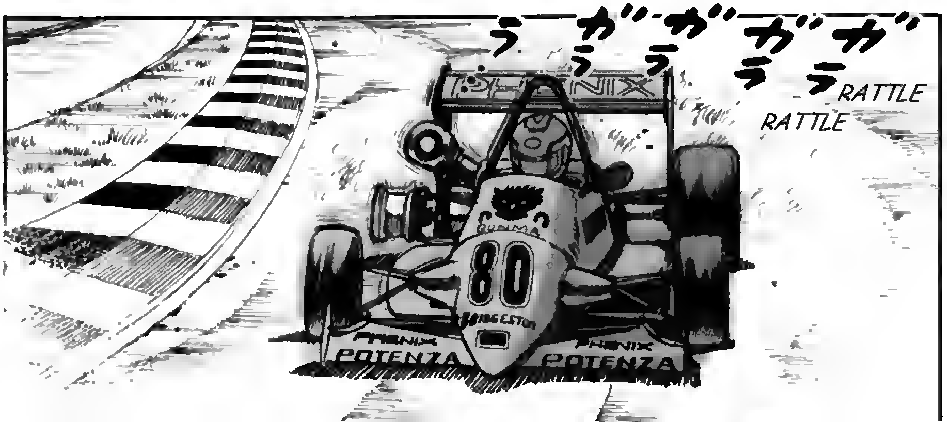


Winner!
山口自動車
Yamaguchi Auto
YAMAG
MOTO


ROOARRRR
NISSAN

Gunma
...

His tire...
His ...


ガガガガガガ
RATTLE
RATTLE
80
PHENIX
POTENZA
PHENIX
POTENZA

SPLOOSH
CIRCUIT
Aha ha ha ha ha...
POP
I'd like to smack you!
GLUG
Hey, Chipper, how you like that!?
Ha ha ha ha!
Ain't nobody gets in front of me!
MUTTER
Ha ha ha ha!

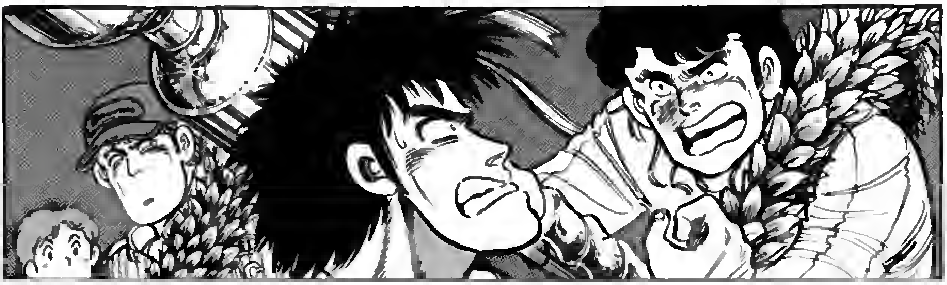
G-
Gunma,
stop it...
TWITCH
レロレロ
Good job
not
giving
up, way
to go!
Hey there,
Akagi. So,
10th place,
huh!?
Stop it
Gunma!
SMACK
NGK
MOTORS

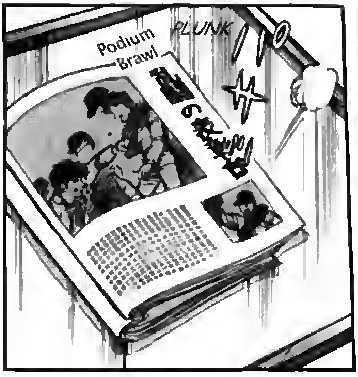
F

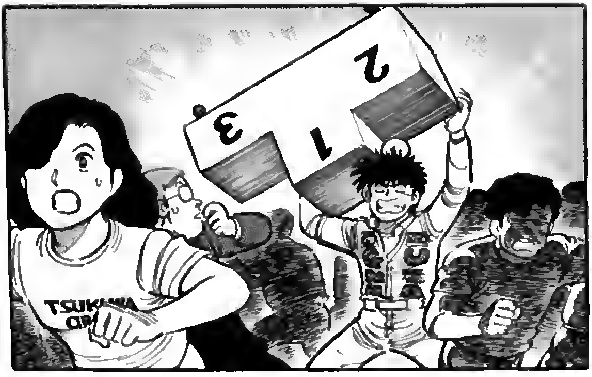
VOL.9

Chapter 8: Revived Passion

RACING WON
乱闘の表彰台
連勝を阻まれた赤木選手の痴態
Podium Brawl-Shameful display by Akagi after his loss-

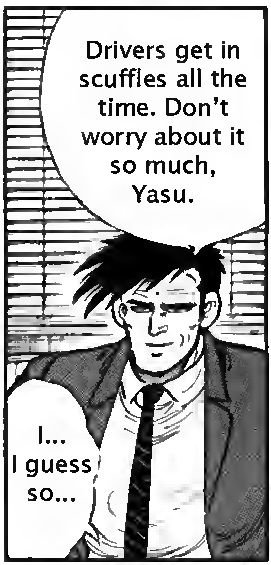


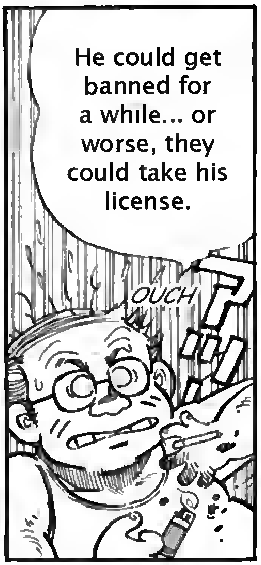

Podium Brawl
PLUNK

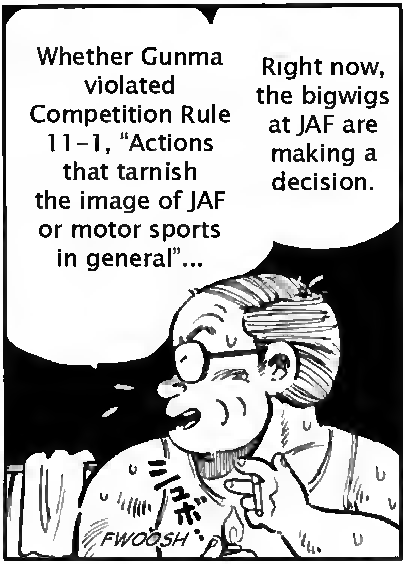

2
1
3

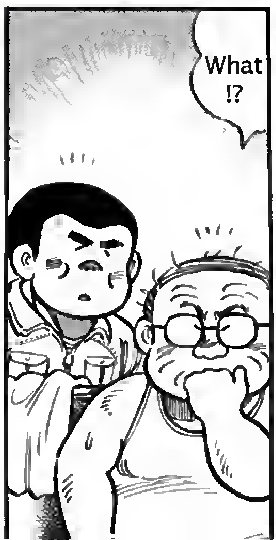
...forced his way in between Akagi and Chipper as they battled for first...
Akagi's anger is understandable. In the second hairpin of the final lap, Yamaguchi...
Man, the picture takes up half of the page.
This is horrible...
It was a very dangerous situation. If Yamaguchi didn't change his line, Akagi would have likely gone off course. But with fearsome control, Akagi managed to squeeze into the lead.
...which ended with Chipper going off course temporarily. Then Yamaguchi practically forced Akagi to the very edge of the track.
Just keep reading!
This article is actually pretty sympa-thetic!
Really, the person who resented Yamaguchi the most must have been R. Chipper, who had been dragged out of first place.

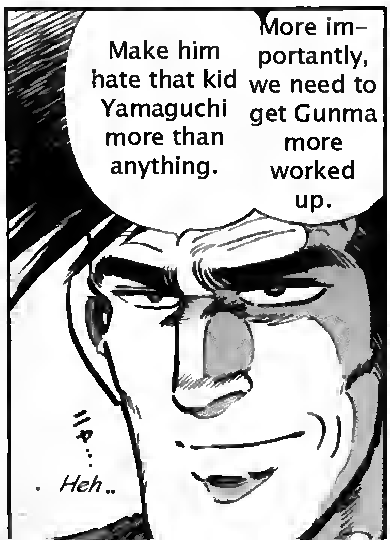
Ha ha ha, it is pretty harsh!
...his violent actions are shameful, with no room for sympathy.
But these kinds of exciting events are just part of racing. Since Akagi then burst his tire through no one's fault but his own...
RACING WORLD


Drivers get in scuffles all the time. Don't worry about it so much, Yasu.
I... I guess so...


He could get banned for a while... or worse, they could take his license.
OUCH
アッ


Whether Gunma violated Competition Rule 11-1, "Actions that tarnish the image of JAF or motor sports in general"...
Right now, the bigwigs at JAF are making a decision.
FWOOSH


What !?

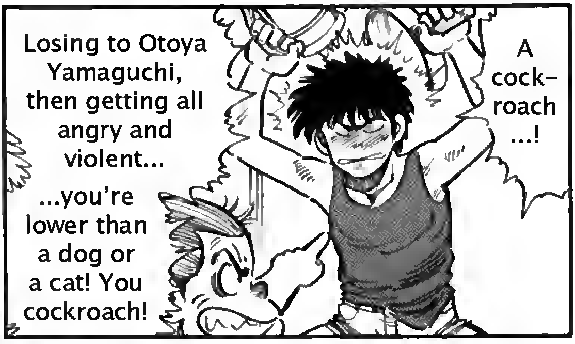

Make him hate that kid Yamaguchi more than anything.
More importantly, we need to get Gunma more worked up.
Heh..

Agh... I hope he gets away with just a fine...
HUFF
HUFF

SLAM
I'm going out...
...?
The light is back in Gunma's eyes...!
Didn't you see...?
WOOSH
...you stupid old hag!
CRASHHH
You...

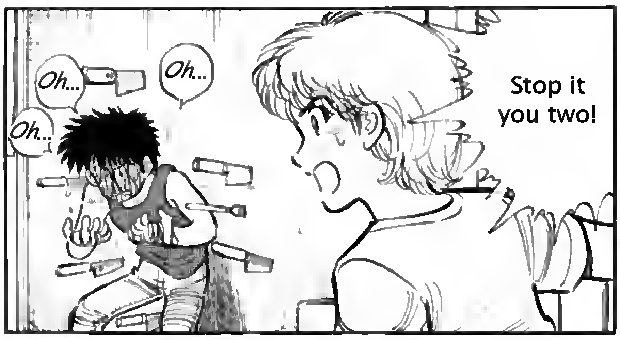
Say that again, I dare you!
Oh I'll say it again alright!
You're a moron! A sore loser with a brain of a cock-roach!

How dare you...
Y-y-y-you ...


Losing to Otoya Yamaguchi, then getting all angry and violent...
...you're lower than a dog or a cat! You cockroach!
A cock-roach ...!

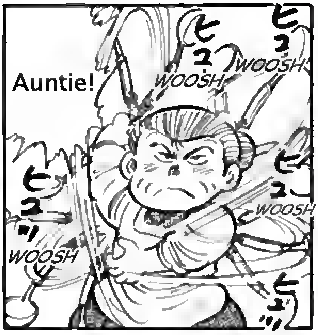
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK
THUNK

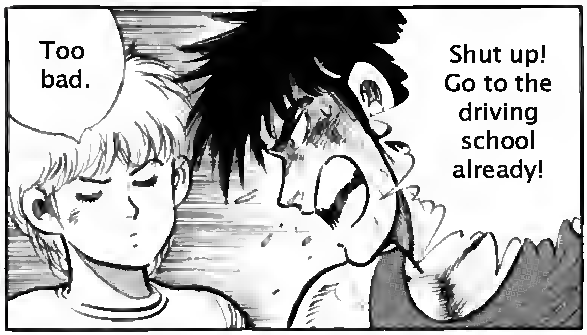
Hmph!
You wanna play rough!?

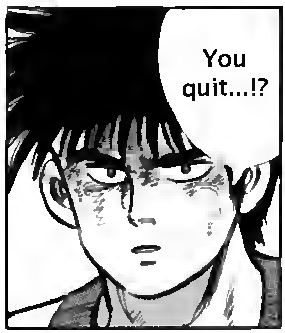

Oh...
Oh...
Oh...
Stop it you two!

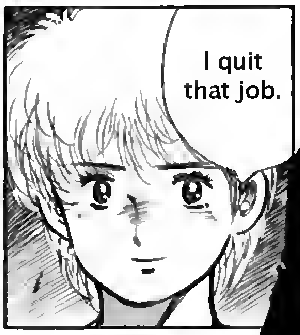
SLICE
Not too shabby, old hag!

Geez... What are you two going on about...!?


Auntie!
WOOSH
WOOSH
WOOSH
WOOSH
WOOSH

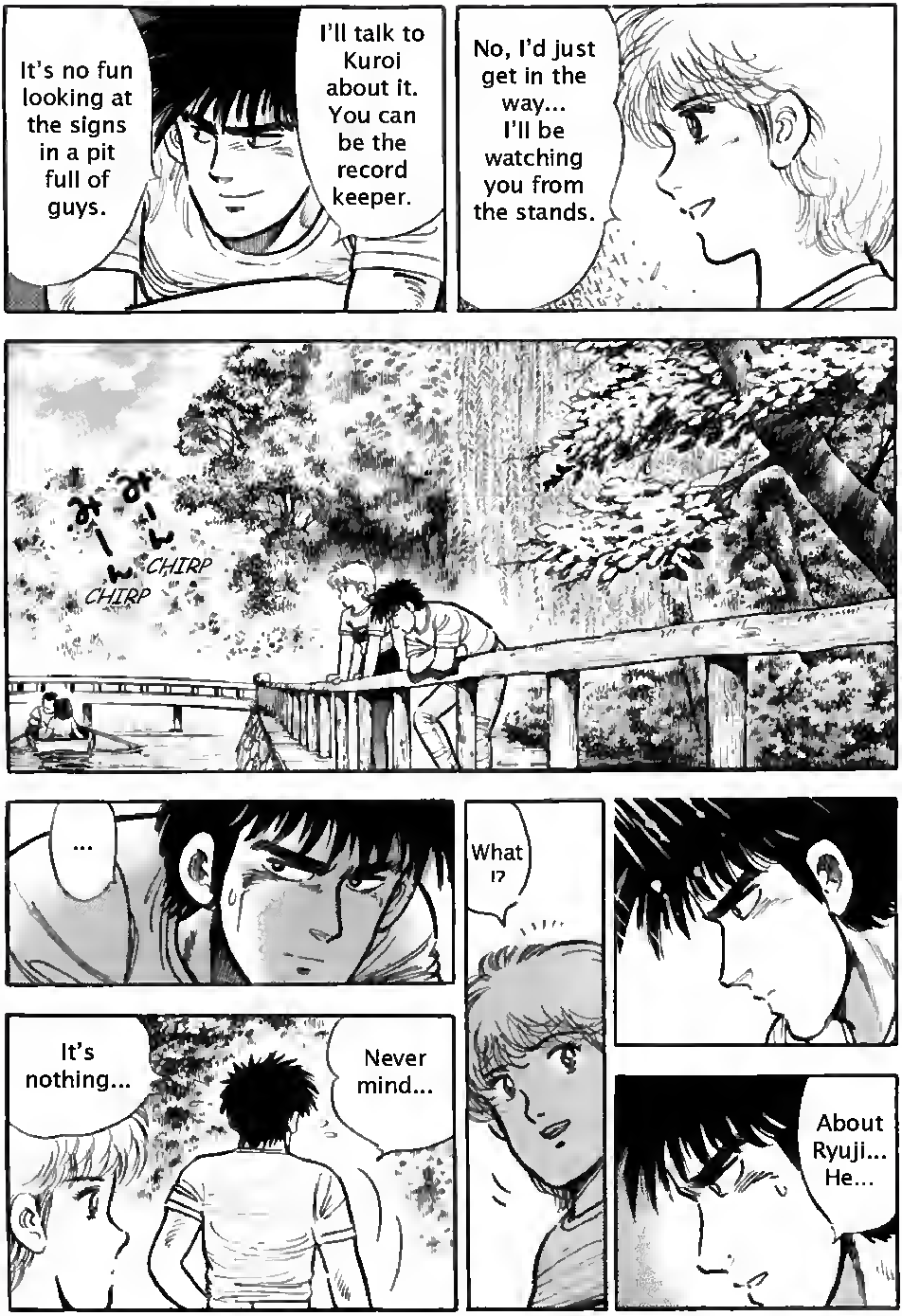

Too bad.
Shut up! Go to the driving school already!

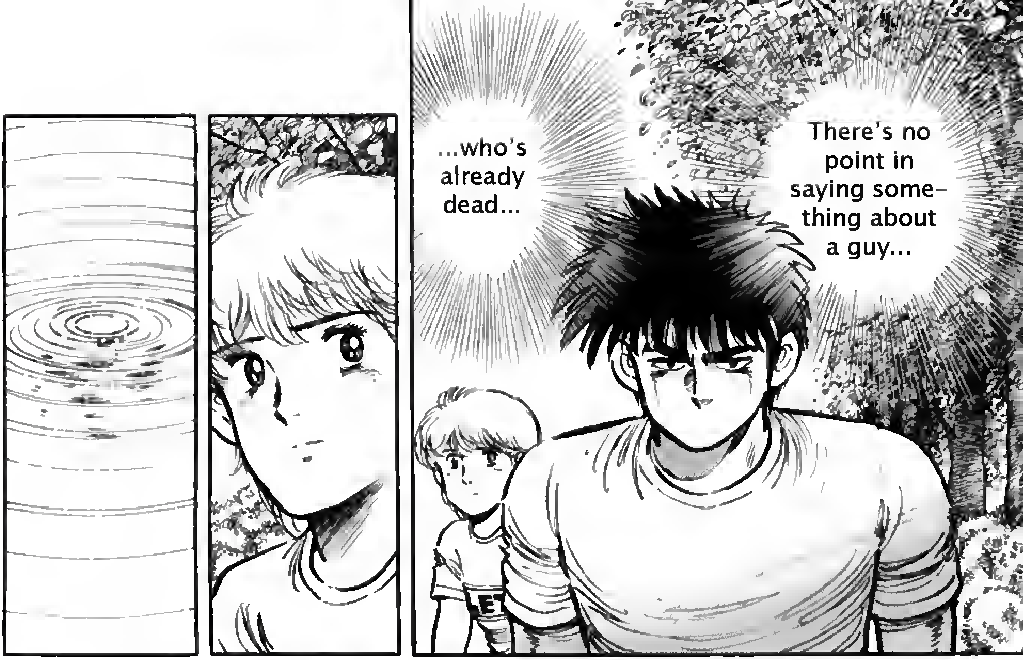

You quit...!?

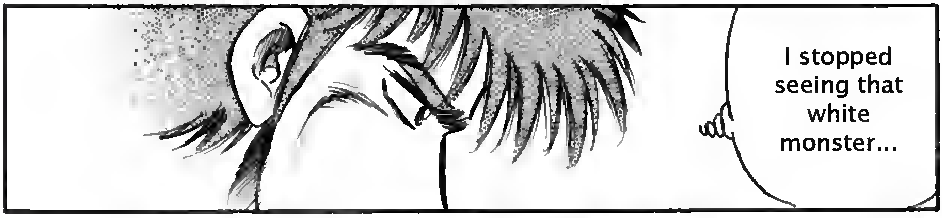

I quit that job.

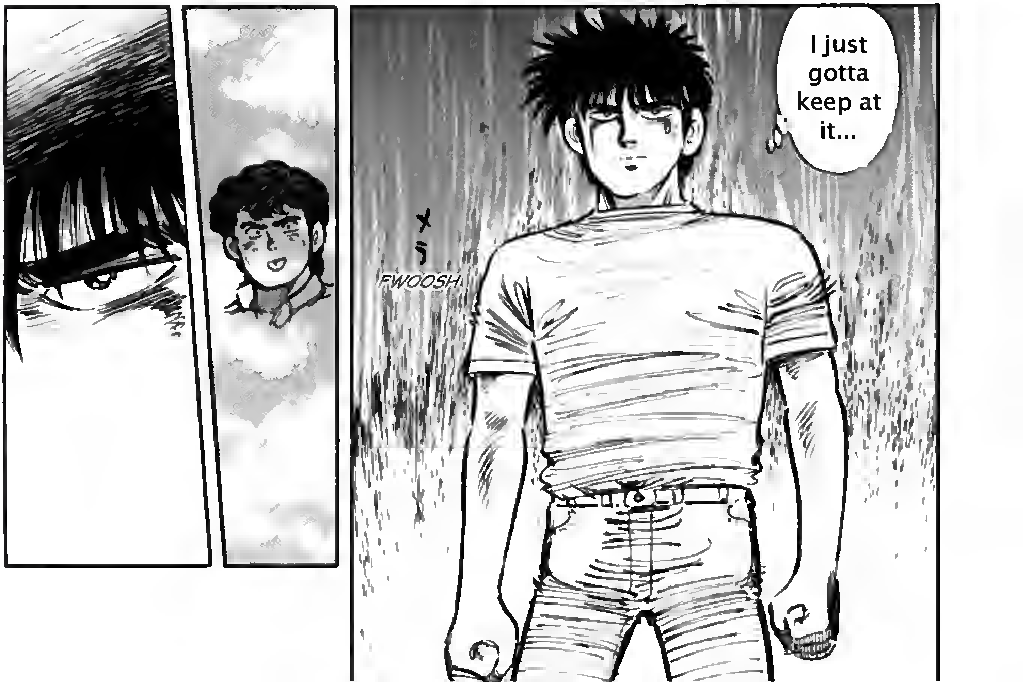
Gunma, you better be paying for every-thing you broke!

CHIRP CHIRP
CHIRP
Why'd you quit?
SMACK
Hmm, just because, huh?
Just because ...
At least for now.
But that means you got some spare time.
Then join my pit.
I guess a single lady like you has no worries...

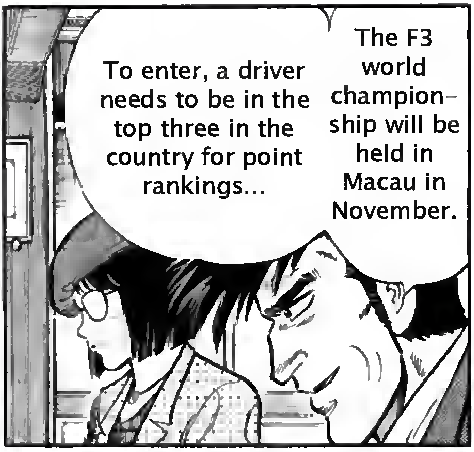

It's no fun looking at the signs in a pit full of guys.
I'll talk to Kuroi about it. You can be the record keeper.
No, I'd just get in the way... I'll be watching you from the stands.
CHIRP
CHIRP
...
What!?
It's nothing...
Never mind...
About Ryuji... He...

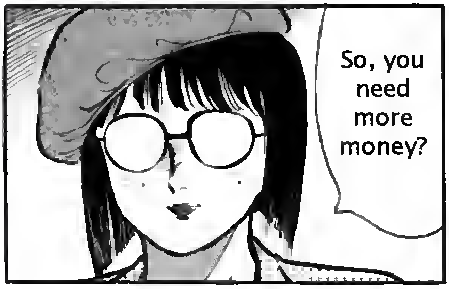

...who's already dead...
There's no point in saying something about a guy...


I stopped seeing that white monster...

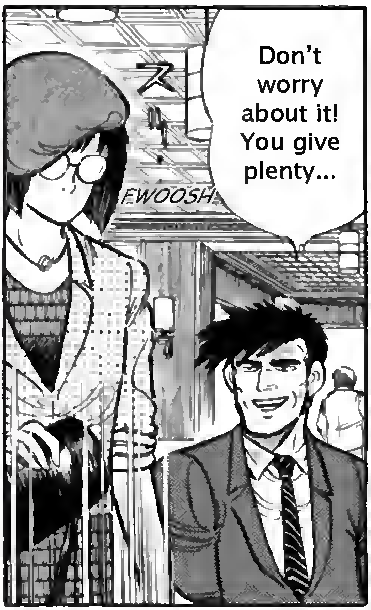

I just gotta keep at it...
FWOOSH

パーー
HONK
ガヤ
ガヤ
YAK
YAK
HOTEL PL
ブルル
VRRR
Hey
...

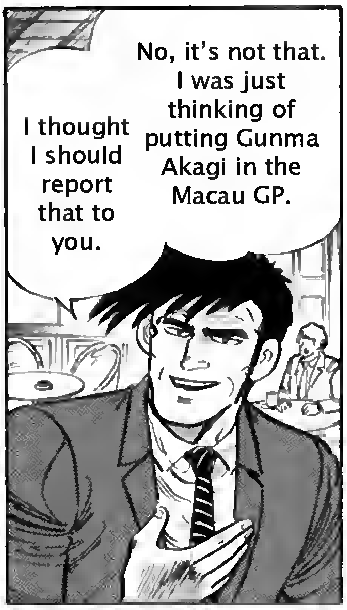

To enter, a driver needs to be in the top three in the country for point rankings...
The F3 world champion-ship will be held in Macau in November.


So, you need more money?

Since Akagi is first in the point rankings, he is of course qualified.


Don't worry about it! You give plenty...
EWOOSH

If you run out of money, please tell me. I'll handle it.


I thought I should report that to you.
No, it's not that. I was just thinking of putting Gunma Akagi in the Macau GP.

If it's no bother ...
Um ...
Good bye.
Please enter the Macau GP! I'm looking forward to it.
You're always so helpful, I'd like to...
How about having dinner together some time?
Just who is that girl anyway ...?
...is that it remain a total secret from everybody involved.
The condition for my company to act anonymously as his sponsor...
You know that!

I would like this team to help advance him to F3. My company will provide all the necessary support.
There is a FJ driver called Gunma Akagi.
She suddenly showed up a year ago...
Make especially sure that Gunma Akagi doesn't find out.
There's no need to mention the company name.
However, circumstances dictate that this must remain a secret.
First priority is Macau...
Oh well. I'll look into it some time.

W– What did he do!?
That Gunma ...
What's wrong, Granny!?
That's not it, Ta– motsu.
Where is he!? Dang it!
HONK!
I'm just relieved.
Gunma got his fire back.
You know, Tamotsu... Every living thing born in this world eventually dies. And during its lifetime...
...they repeat a cycle of little deaths and births...

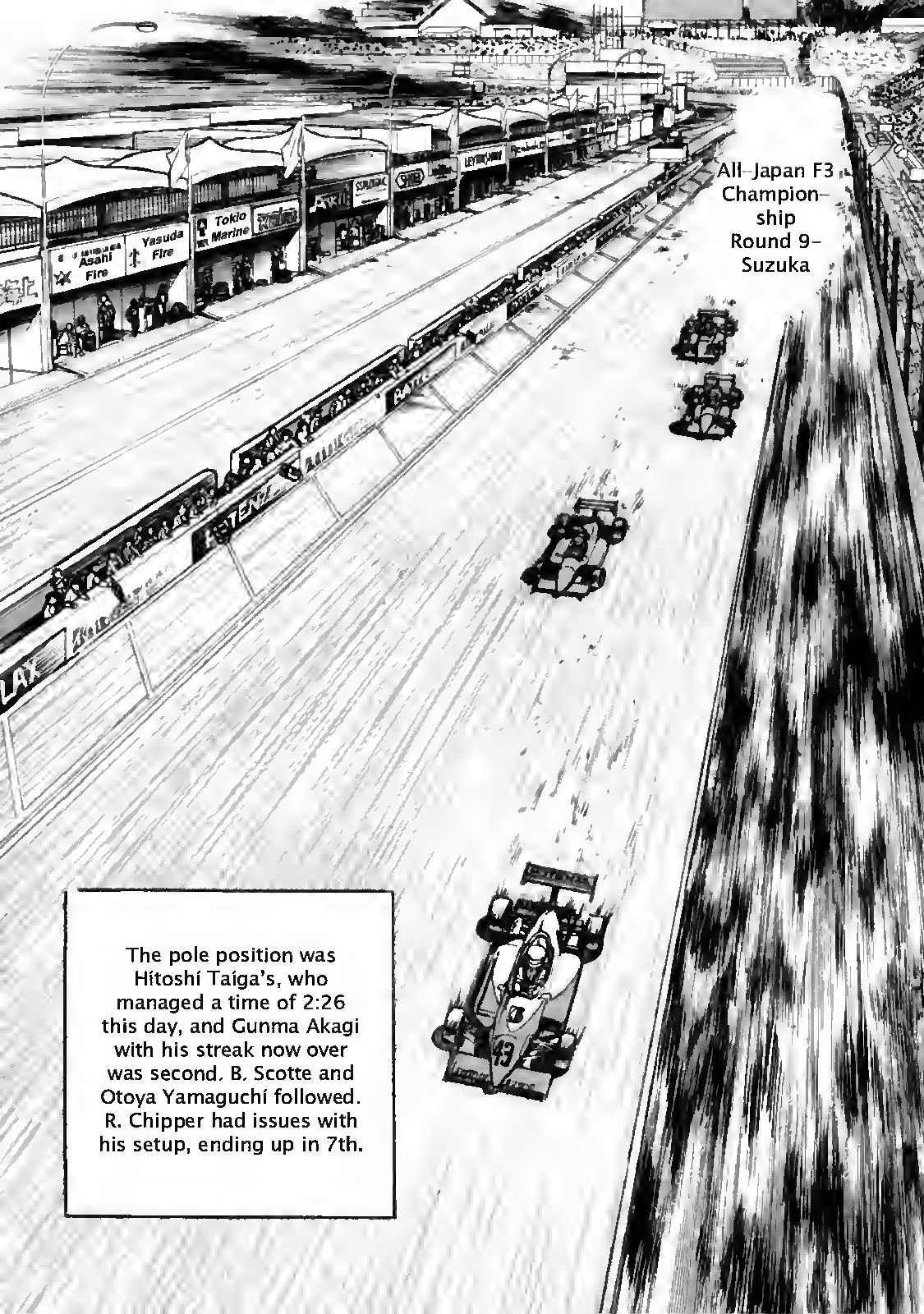
?
...and plants are born in spring, thrive in summer, wither in autumn, and die in winter...
...or like the tide, high to low and back.
Dying at night and reviving in the morning is one...
You take care, Tamotsu! Guys like Gunma who burn their energy to the limits are in danger of falling into air pockets every once in a while!
At this age, I feel very strongly how life always flickers between light and darkness. Sometimes bright, sometimes dim.
HA HA HA はは はは。
Eh, he should be fine for a while, though...
...!
Gunma is always facing that same risk.
That's probably what happened to Ryuji.
As long as he keeps racing!
WOBBLE
SHUFFLE

Three days later, the JAF (Japan Automobile Federation) made their ruling- Gunma Akagi would face a fine and have his driver points halved for the incident at Round 8 of the All-Japan F3 Championship.

F

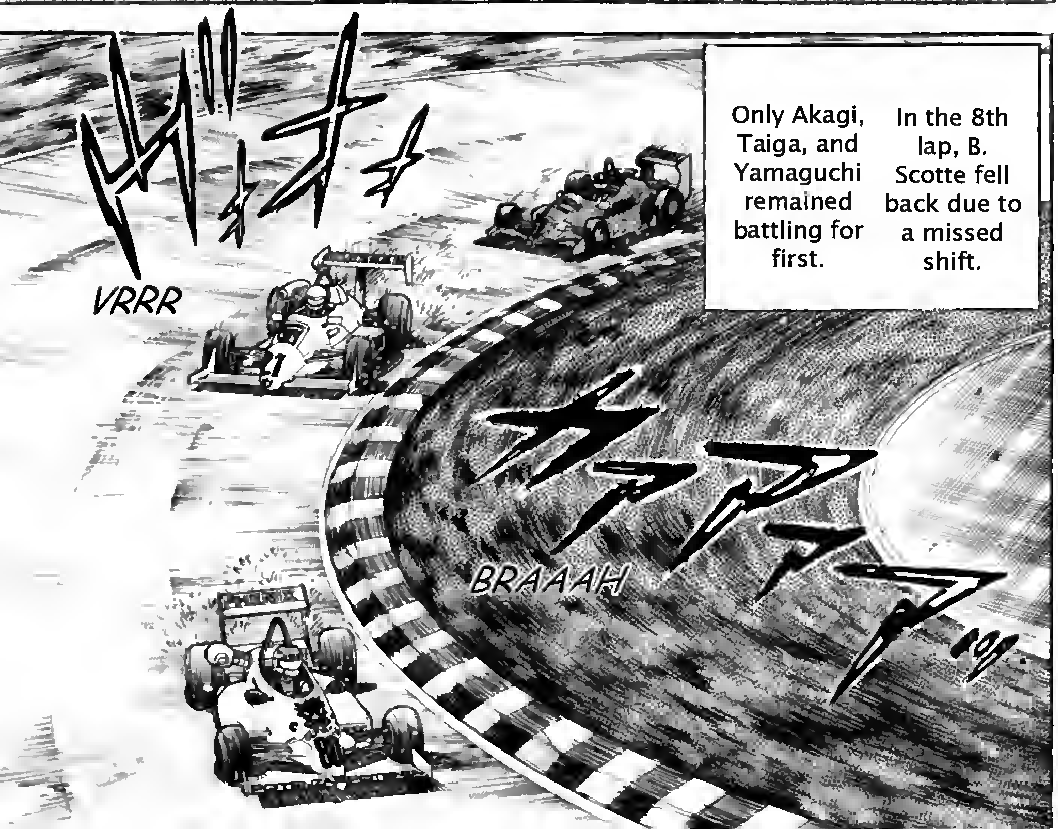
VOL.9

Chapter 9: Time Moves On


All-Japan F3 Championship Round 9- Suzuka
Asahi Fire
Yasuda Fire
Tokio Marine
The pole position was Hitoshi Taiga's, who managed a time of 2:26 this day, and Gunma Akagi with his streak now over was second. B. Scotte and Otoya Yamaguchi followed. R. Chipper had issues with his setup, ending up in 7th.

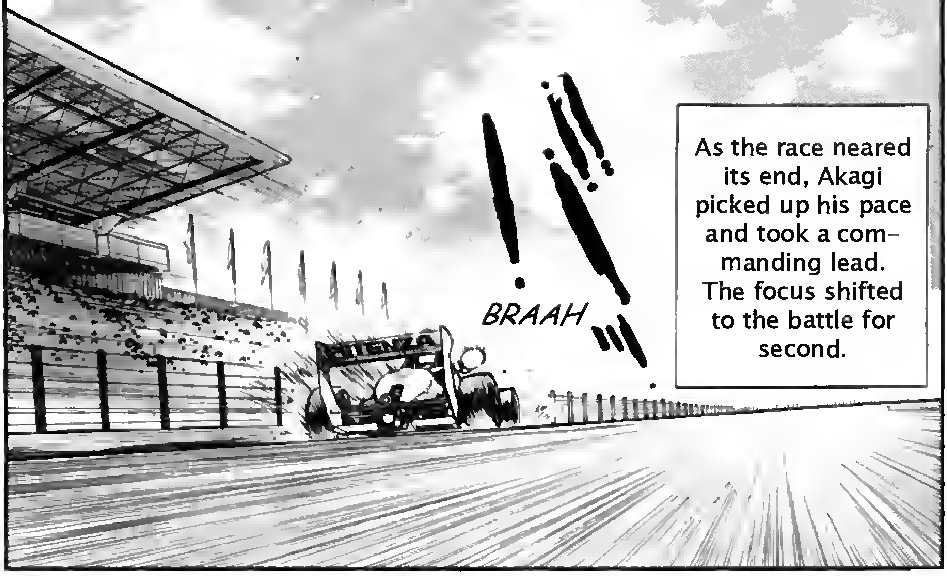
In the 5th lap, Taiga was pushed out of first as Akagi left him behind.

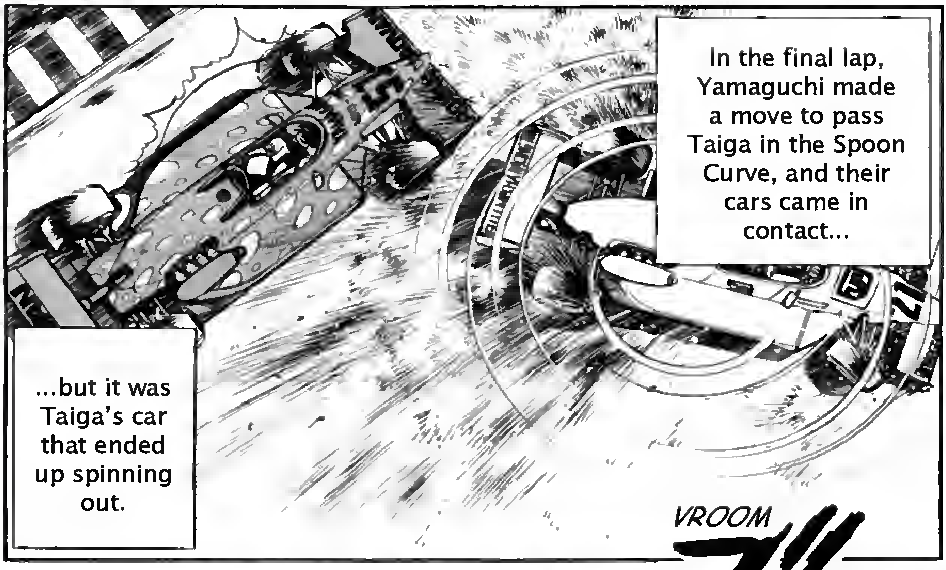
B. Scotte and Otoya Yamaguchi followed.

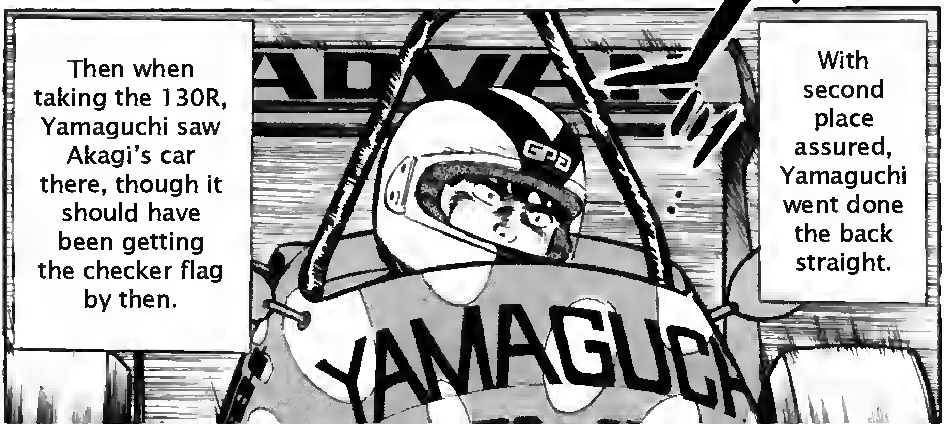


Only Akagi, Taiga, and Yamaguchi remained battling for first.

In the 8th lap, B. Scotte fell back due to a missed shift.


BRAAH
As the race neared its end, Akagi picked up his pace and took a commanding lead. The focus shifted to the battle for second.


In the final lap, Yamaguchi made a move to pass Taiga in the Spoon Curve, and their cars came in contact...
...but it was Taiga's car that ended up spinning out.
VROOM


Then when taking the 130R, Yamaguchi saw Akagi's car there, though it should have been getting the checker flag by then.
With second place assured, Yamaguchi went done the back straight.
YAMAGUCHI

It turns out Akagi bumped into a car he was lapping, and went off course in the final chicane.
VROOOM
Akagi, having met misfortune once more, could only watch as Yamaguchi drove past. Yamaguchi again had his luck rewarded with a checker flag.

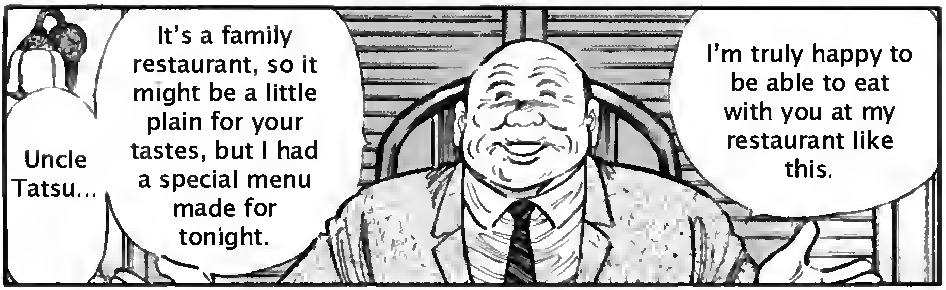
Was it necessary to rush past ta car he was lapping, with his solid lead in first?
Along with his misconduct at Tsukuba, it seems Akagi is struggling with a series of bad luck.
GUNMA
Kurai Racing Team
In contrast, with his lucky third win this season, Otoya Yamaguchi is apparently on very good terms with the goddess of victory.
YAMAGUCHI
With the JAF committee's decision, Akagi's points were halved to 60, which Yamaguchi has now tied.

Sounds like he's having a pretty tough time.
Series of bad luck, huh...?
MUNCH
I gotta try my best too.
But he really is amazing ...
Huff!
Huff!
Huff!
Dad is busy getting ready for the next election, traveling all around...
Shoma seems to be getting busier every day working as the heir...
Alright! I'll go run a bit more...

I'm the only one doing nothing and wasting time...
And Gunma too...
Damn, th-this stupid heart...
Huff!

Everything around me is as quiet as if it was all dead.
Or the birds, or the rustling of the trees...
It's so quiet now...
I can't even hear the wind.
I'm...
Damn it. Why was I even born...?
Yuma...
Don't be ridicu-lous!
I'm okay ...
W-What is wrong with you? You went running again! Oh my, look at your face! It's all blue...
I'm fine, Mom...

RESTAURANT
Royal Sun
24時間
Thanks for coming, Shoma.

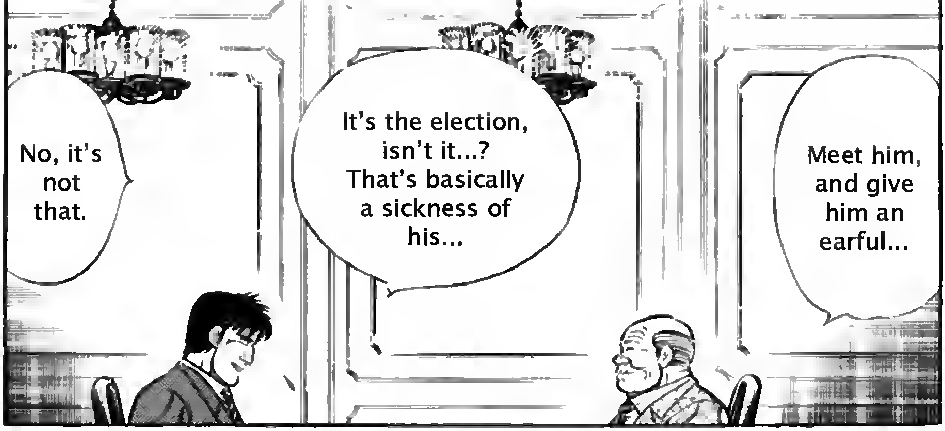

Uncle Tatsu...
It's a family restaurant, so it might be a little plain for your tastes, but I had a special menu made for tonight.
I'm truly happy to be able to eat with you at my restaurant like this.

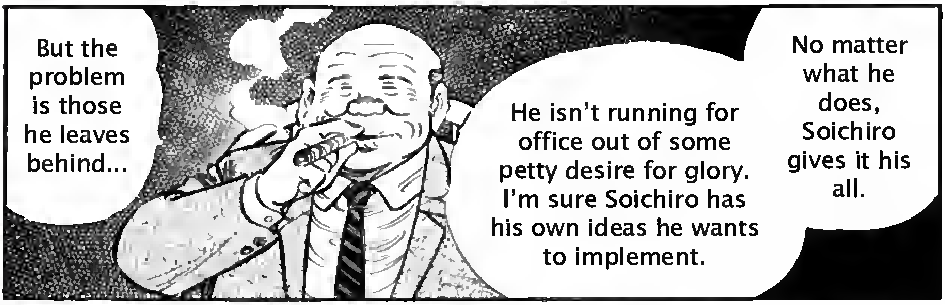
I'm nothing but the owner of a diner...
Oh, it's no-thing.

I'd like to congratu-late you on your success.

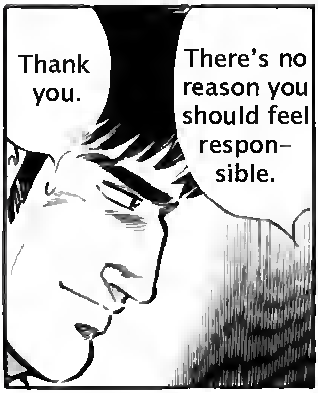
Well, let's drink.

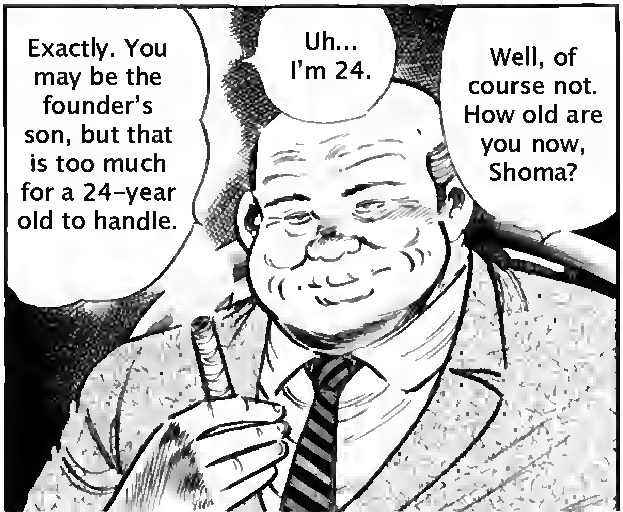
It's been 20 years already since your dad abandoned me... Time sure does fly...
Father always talks about you, saying how impressive you are... He says that the development of the restaurant industry is all thanks to your foresight.
PLUNK
Father wanted to meet you as well.
It's three times as many, Shoma. 240 locations nationwide.
Is that so... Even more impres-sive...
Uh ...
I'd like to meet Soichiro too...
You have 80 locations in the Kanto area. There is not a person in Kanto who hasn't heard of the Royal Sun chain.
And you have twice that many locations nationwide. Truly, the industry leader!


No, it's not that.
It's the election, isn't it...? That's basically a sickness of his...
Meet him, and give him an earful...


But the problem is those he leaves behind...
He isn't running for office out of some petty desire for glory. I'm sure Soichiro has his own ideas he wants to implement.
No matter what he does, Soichiro gives it his all.

Yes... It's all because I'm not up to the task...
It seems like a lot of the Akagi Group's companies are in the red...
I was worried and so had some people check...


Thank you.
There's no reason you should feel respon-sible.


Exactly. You may be the founder's son, but that is too much for a 24-year old to handle.
Uh... I'm 24.
Well, of course not. How old are you now, Shoma?

Kasai, is it...?
I truly have so much to thank him for...
...I end up relying on Mr. Kasai to deal with handling the Akagi Group.
I'm young, and still just a novice...
Isn't it about time you settled down?
What do you think, Shoma...?
Yes ...
Uh ...
If you're interested, there is no end to potential partners! How about it, why don't you leave it to me?
Marriage, Shoma, marriage! Considering the responsibilities you have, it is certainly not too early!
Huh!?

Marriage.
TAP
Oh …
What, were you out some-where…?
Can I give this woman up…!?
Can I…
Shop-ping.
Yes …

Yuki ...
St...Stop. No, not here...
I said stop it...
You sure look dressed up just to go shopping...
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
Is everyday boring!? Do you feel suffocated!? You're so unhappy, you must want to die!
C'mon. Do you hate me...?
I... hate you. I... I hate you so much...
Ahh
You creep me out... You make me sick...
Ah!
You... Huff huff... You've got quite a mouth on you.
Ahh
Ah.
Ahh
Ah

Ahhh ...
I can't give this woman up...
No... I can't do it...
Yuki...

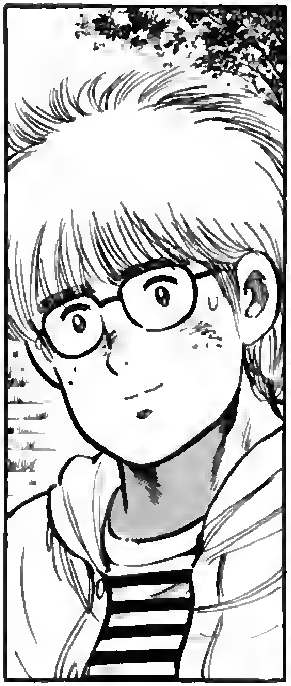
F

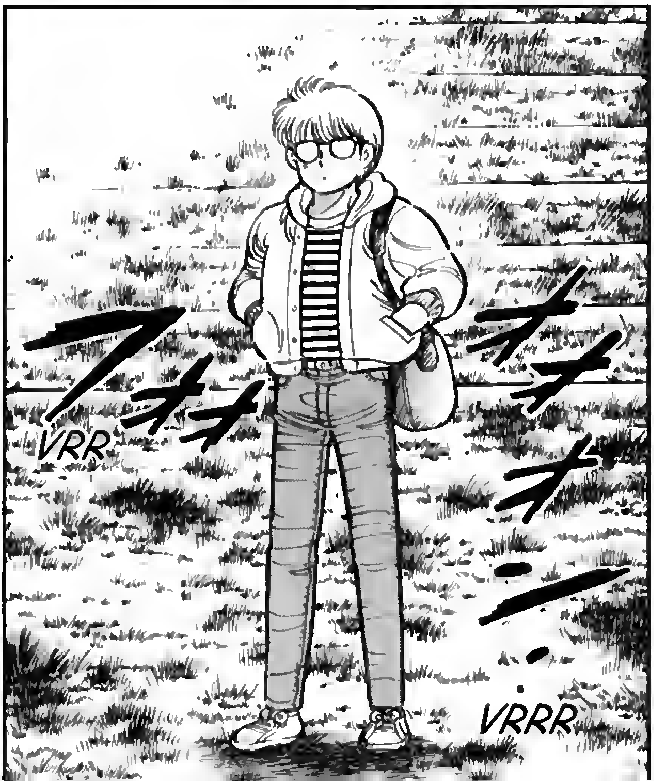
VOL.9

Chapter 10: Amplitude

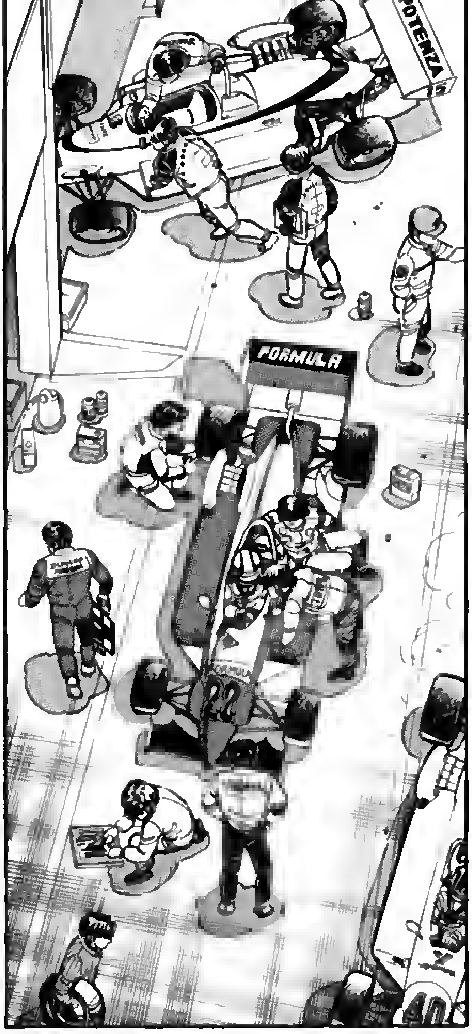
ゴゴゴゴ
ZOOOM
SEIKO

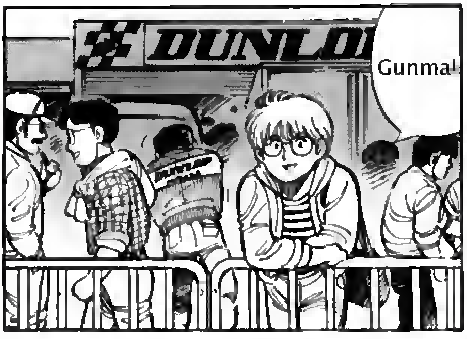
グランドスタンド200m
最終コーナー N.トライアングル
Grandstand 200 m
Last Corner N. Triangle
ブォォォーン
BRAAAAH

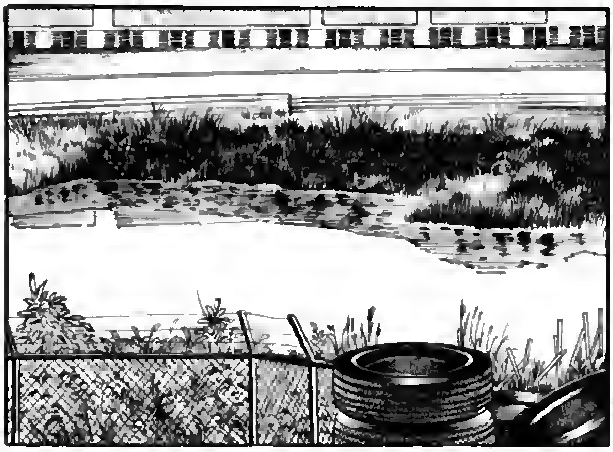


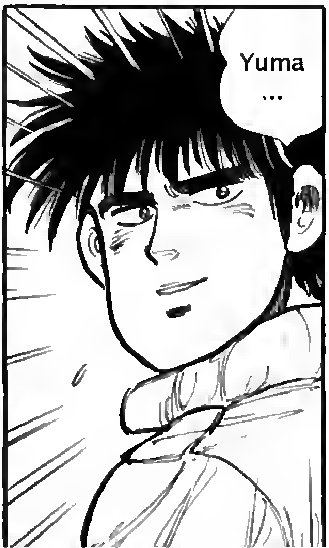

ブォォォーン
VRR
VRRR

LEYTON HOUSE
VRROOOOOM
HURDI RACING TEAM
80
PHENIX
Wow... That's really loud...
VRRRVRRVRRR
POP
POP
My ear-drums are vibrating...
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP
THUMP


FORMULA


DUNLOP
Gunma!




Yuma
...

What are you doing out here?
I've got a lot of free time lately. Thought I'd drop by.
Free time? What happened to going to high school in America?
I quit already.
You were always sick, come to think of it...
I see...
I've been having trouble with this guy here.
You quit!?
It's nice here...
I thought circuits would be more tense...
...but it's like you're just playing in the middle of a field...
It was even better before, but they went and built a parking lot.

And Yuki?
I'm the only one just hanging around doing nothing.
Dad is busy getting ready for the election, and Shoma is stuck running the company.
How is every-one...?
I don't know about Yuki... I haven't seen her for a while...
!
Okay.
I'm going to drive again... Watch me.
We'll go eat after.
No, the final round at Suzuka is a long ways off. First, there's Macau.
Is there a race soon?
Yeah.
What are you doing? Practice?
VROOOM

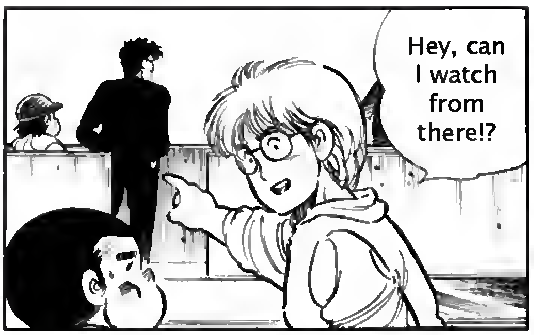
I'm going for his sake as well.
There was a man who died dreaming of the land of passion, sun and life.
Yeah, I am. It was decided.
Macau... You're going!?
Hey!
?
Must be nice ...
...
Nice to meet you!
Hello. I'm his brother Yuma.
Hey now.
I'll introduce you, this is my girl!
KURO RACING TEAM
KURO RACING TEAM

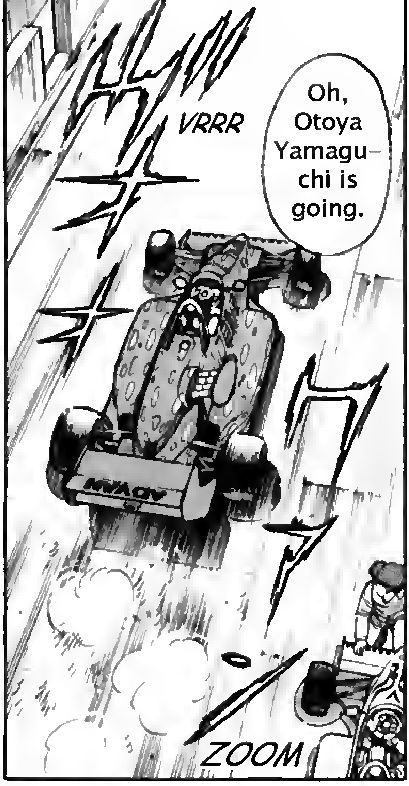
Hey Yuma, put in ear plugs.
So this is a race car, huh...?
Yuma's real smart. And he's real nice too.
They're not very much alike, are they?
That's the kind of guy I'd go for if I was a woman...
I don't need any!
...!
...it's not good for your heart.
If you hear this up close...
I said no!
Just put them in!
BANG
Fine, idiot. Do what you want!
CLUNK

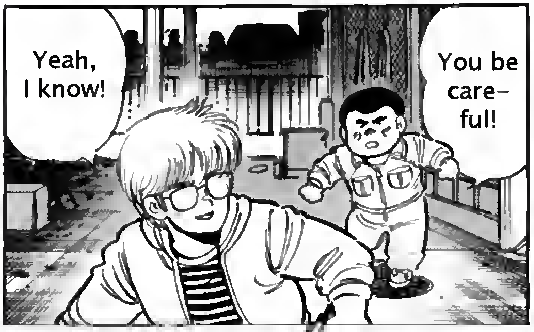
...
VRRVRRVRROOM
POTENZA
I... I'm fine, totally fine...
Are... are you okay, Yuma?
VROOOM

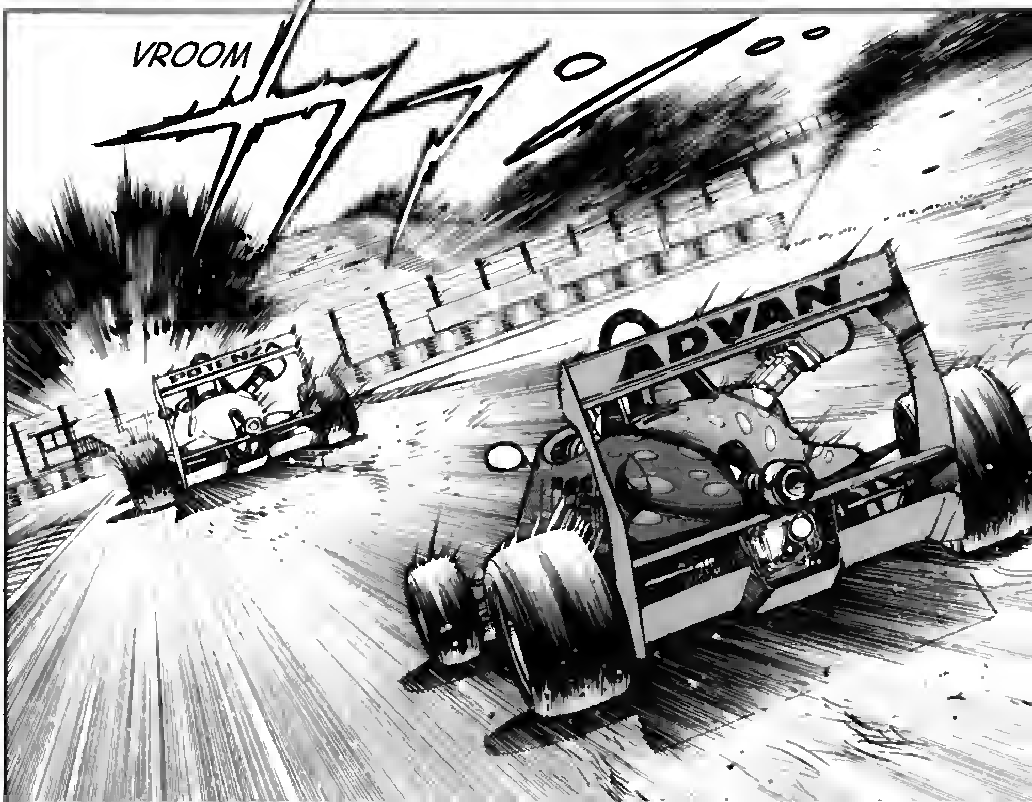
Hey, is Gunma going to Macau!?
Yeah, he is.
With his recent bad luck, I guess there's nothing he can do but try harder!
Heh heh, he's sure going all out today!
Are you not going then?
If he does, I'll win the final round at Suzuka too, and become series champion!
Tell him to at least try not to hurt himself.
Was that Otoya Yamaguchi just now?
Yup ...
Hmph, big-mouth.
It looks like the goddess of victory prefers handsome guys like me.
I'll think it over some more, heh heh heh...
...but I don't wanna be too much of a hassle for Gunma.
I could go...

That don't matter.
But he keeps losing.
He's pretty fast, but Gunma's way faster...
Is he fast?
...and after dealing with the emptiness of overcoming that obstacle...
...he has to get used to how it feels to race now.
Now that he's overcome his obstacle ...
Yup!
Gunma has something more important than winning or losing each race right now.
Racing is a gamble. Winning or losing is a matter of luck.
Something more important!?
Wow!
He's gotten a little bit closer to the real thing, Yuma!
I can't wait to see how he can compete at a global level at the Macau F3!
Gunma's gotten faster, and he's matured.

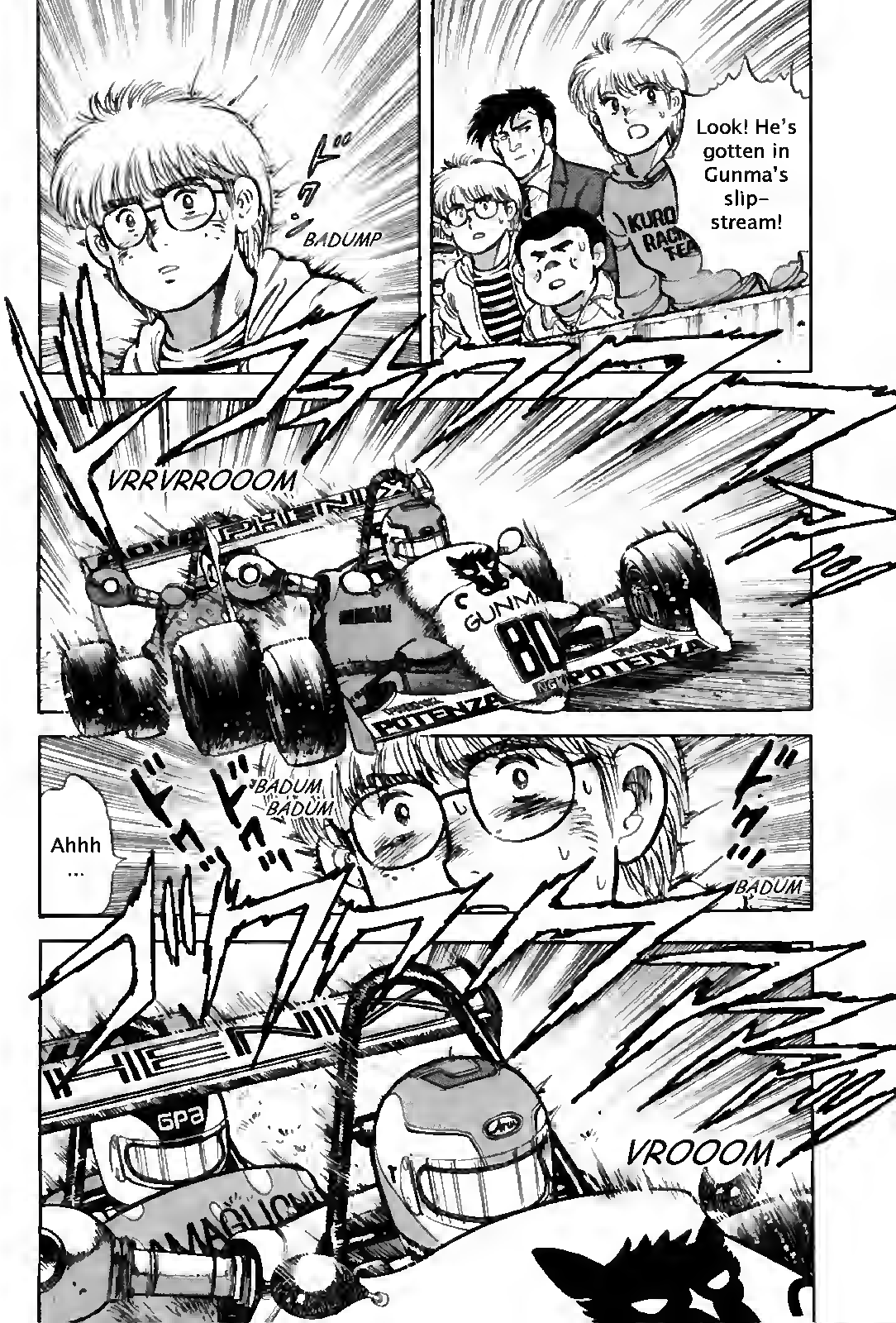

Hey, can I watch from there!?


VRRR
Oh, Otoya Yamaguchi is going.
ZOOM


Yeah, I know!
You be careful!


VROOM
ADVAN

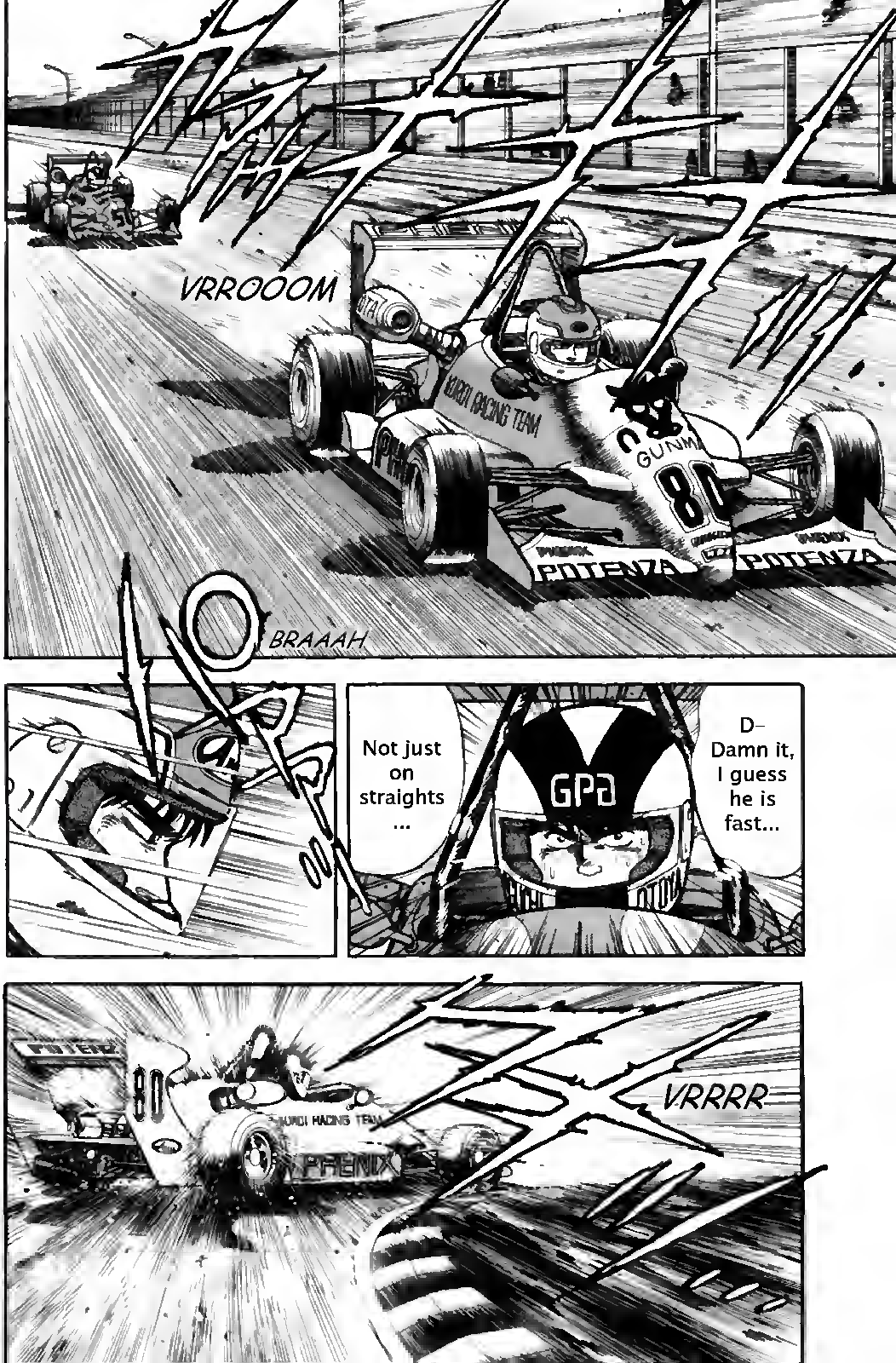
ADVAN
GPJ
YAMAGUCHI
51
Well, if it isn't little Otoya Yamaguchi!
GUMMF
The reason is...
OTOYA
You're no good!
Do you still not get it?
Times aren't everything in a race, Akagi!
...you're going to fade away into nothing!
ZOOM
Thanks to me showing up...
TENZA
ADVAN
...I am one of the chosen ones!
OTOYA

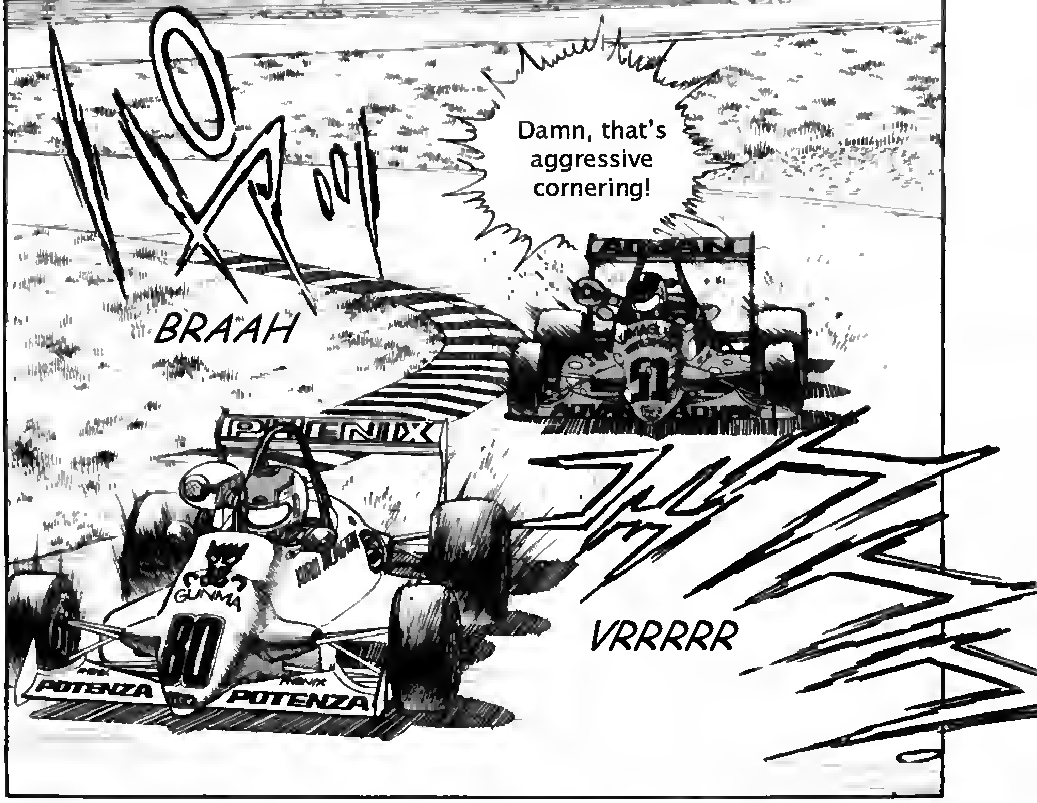

BADUMP
Look! He's gotten in Gunma's slip-stream!
KURO RACING TEA
VRRVRROOOM
GUNMA
80
POTENZA
BADUM
BADUM
Ahhh ...
BADUM
VROOOM

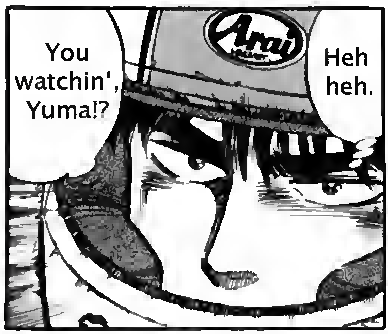
BRR
VRROOOOM
Argh
...
ZOOM

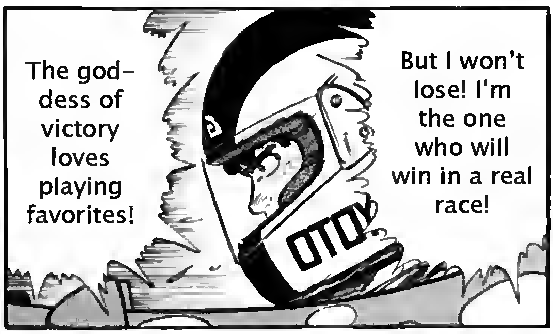
ドクン
BADUMP
Look! He left Yamaguchi choking on his dust!
Man, Gunma's fast!

Chapter 11: Resonance


VRROOOM
KUROI RACING TEAM
GUNM
80
POTENZA
POTENZA
BRAAAH
Not just on straights ...
GPa
D– Damn it, I guess he is fast...
80
KUROI RACING TEAM
PHENIX
VRRRR


Damn, that's aggressive cornering!
BRAAH
VRRRRR
PHENIX
POTENZA
POTENZA
80


You watchin', Yuma!?
Heh heh.


The god-dess of victory loves playing favorites!
But I won't lose! I'm the one who will win in a real race!

BRIDGESTON
BRIDGESTON
ADVAN
POTENZA
ZOOOOOM

Right!? Yuma...
It really is...
His acceleration on the straight, his line in the corner, it's just beautiful!
Look! He pulled away from Yamaguchi in no time.
ズ…
SLIP
Yuma!?
What's wrong, Yuma!?
Yu...

Akagi Head Office, Tokyo–
I knew elections took a lot of money, but I had no idea how much.
Yeah.
Is it money again, Dad?

You wouldn't understand.
Do you want to become a politician that badly?
Our constituency already has strong candidates in it.
I've got to force my way into that select group...
Sir, there's a phone call for you.
HO?!
TWITCH
It's me...
You are basically made of nothing but desire...
It's your tireless ambition, that's all.
I understand.

!!
Yuma's col-lapsed!?
Wh... What did you say!?
D-Dad, there was a call to the house back in Gunma...
Yuma had an attack and collapsed at the Suzuka Circuit...
I have no idea. I thought he was resting at home...
What was he doing there!?
The what!?
The Suzuka Circuit!?
!
It's Gunma ...

BATABATA
BK-117
AKAGI GROUP
CITIZEN
BATABATA
BATABATA

Well... They said the attack has calmed down...
What's his condition!? Did they say anything...?
Damn it... What was Gunma planning on doing with Yuma...?
Hey, hurry up!
I see... He should be okay for now...
I know ...
Calm down! Panicking won't help anything!
BATABATA
BATABATA
BATABATA
BATABATA

Heh heh...
That's why I said to wear ear plugs.
You gave me a scare, you idiot!
Sorry! It's because I heard that huge noise up close.
医務室
Medical Room
It gave my heart a shock.
...it would have spoiled everything, and I wouldn't have understood anything.
But if I wore ear plugs...
Anyway, it's some-thing...
That's a good question ...
What are you trying to under-stand, exactly?
!?
Can I hassle you for one more thing then?
Hey, Gunma ...
Sorry! I'm really sorry!
Hmph, you don't make any sense! Thanks to you, I'm gonna miss out on my practice time! You're a pain in the ass!

C'mon, please?
Can you take me to the Macau GP with you?
What!?
Crap! I yelled by accident! Is your heart okay!?
You idiot! No way I can take someone with a weak heart like you to a race!
Must be nice, Gunma... Always burning your life up to the very limit... I'm jealous...
Hmph...

But that's just the way it is! You've got a weak heart.
What does that matter!?
Am I supposed to just sit and breathe quietly, without ever doing anything I want!?
You've got a weak heart, don't do this, don't do that!
Yuma ...
Yu...
If you get excited, your heart...
C... Calm down, idiot...
NG!
Tell me, what am I supposed to live for!?
C'mon, tell me! Just what am I supposed to do!?
Have you ever thought something like this, Gunma?
Huff!
Huff!
Huff!
Huff!

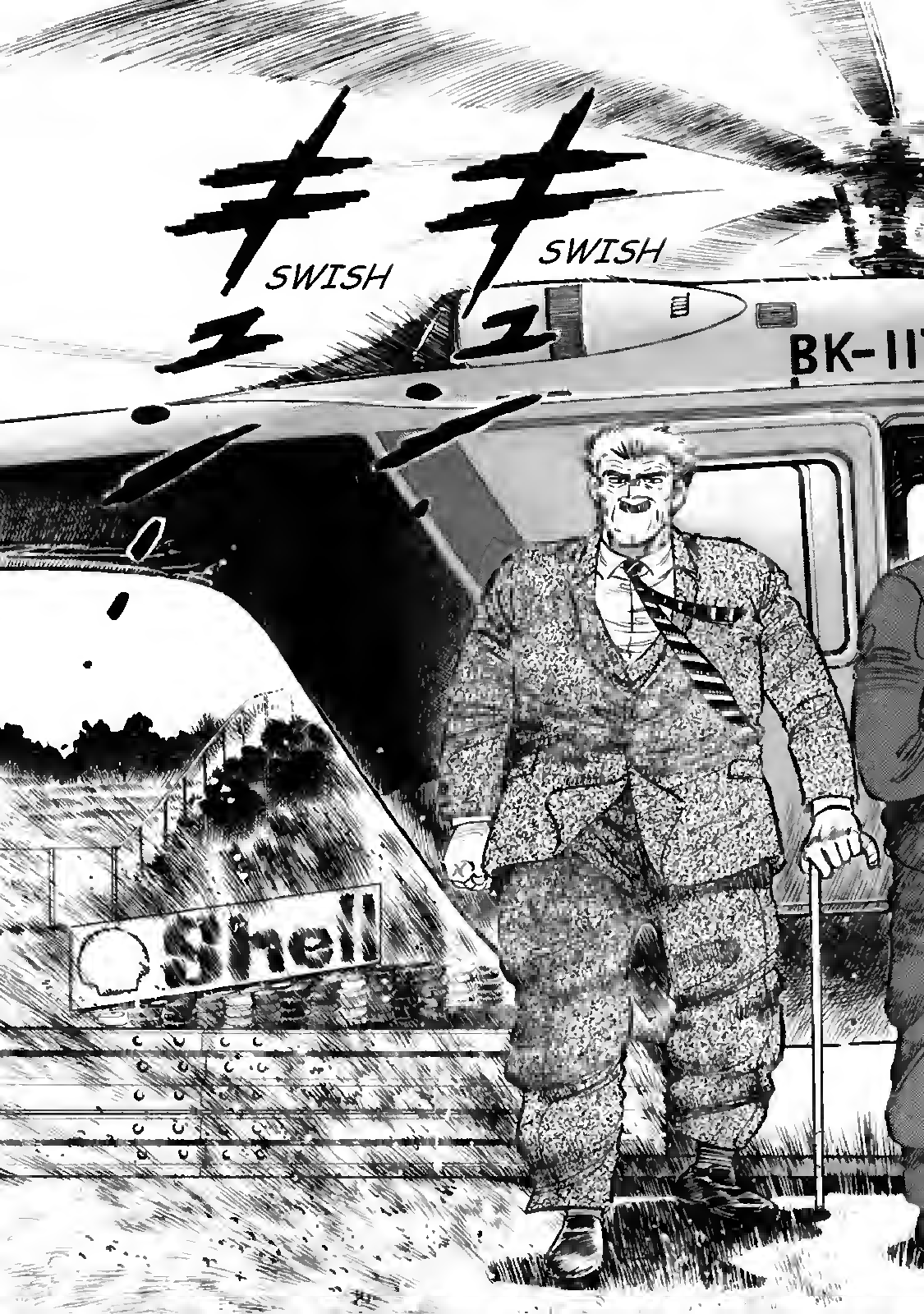
I don't really get it, but you ain't the only one! There's things that piss me off, people I can't stand!
I'm not that smart..
D... Don't ask me tough ques-tions.
The world doesn't even notice me.
God has abandoned me...
Have you ever felt like that...?
Like... Dad?
I hate every-one who gets in front of me! They all piss me off!
Yeah, I hate that geezer for sure.
!
But you don't want to admit it, so you get annoyed and act like you hate him...
I think you actually respect Dad, and love him...
Really...? It doesn't seem like that to me...

Really, you're impressed by their speed and technique. But you don't want to admit it.
It's the same with people who get in front of you...
What ...?
Wha...
You think I...
I'm jealous... You really can try so hard...
But, I...
...to win, to become faster than them.
To become greater than them.
Thats why you try so hard...
... respect him?
I'm jealous of how you're trying to overcome him, no matter what way that is.
Fathers are always a big obstacle children have to overcome.

POTENZA
I mean, it's true that...
...I did grow to like Hijiri, even though he got in front of me...
No!
That old man... He's a different story, Yuma...
But...
It's your dad and Shoma! They just landed!
At the Spoon Curve heliport...
H... Hey, Gunma ...!
SLAM
!

SWISH
SWISH
SWISH
SWISH
BK-117
Shell

SWISH
SWISH


SWISH
SWISH
BK-II
Shell

F

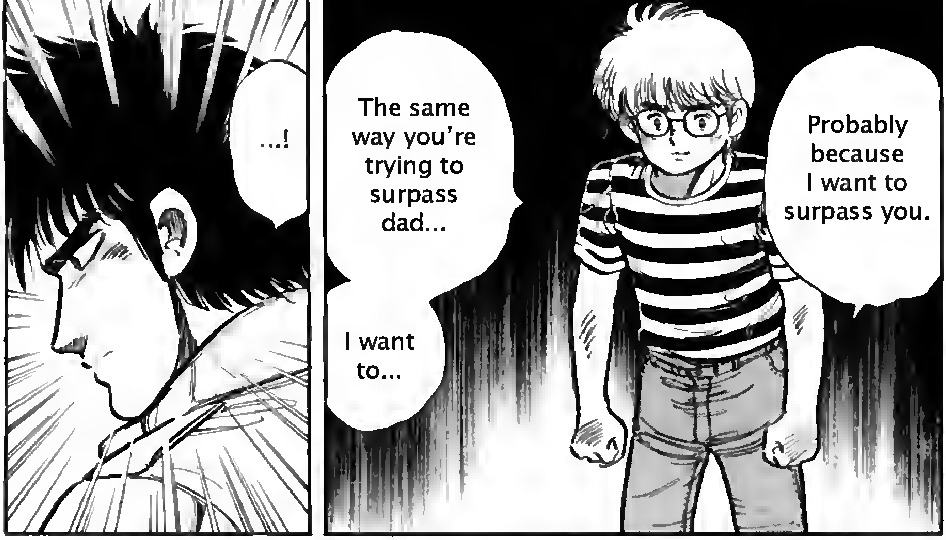
VOL.9

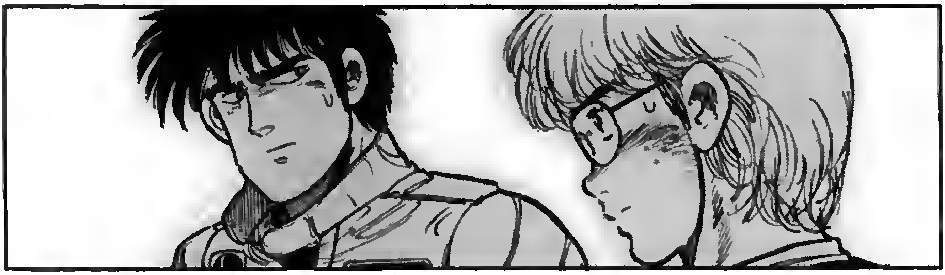
Chapter 12:
Mobius Strip

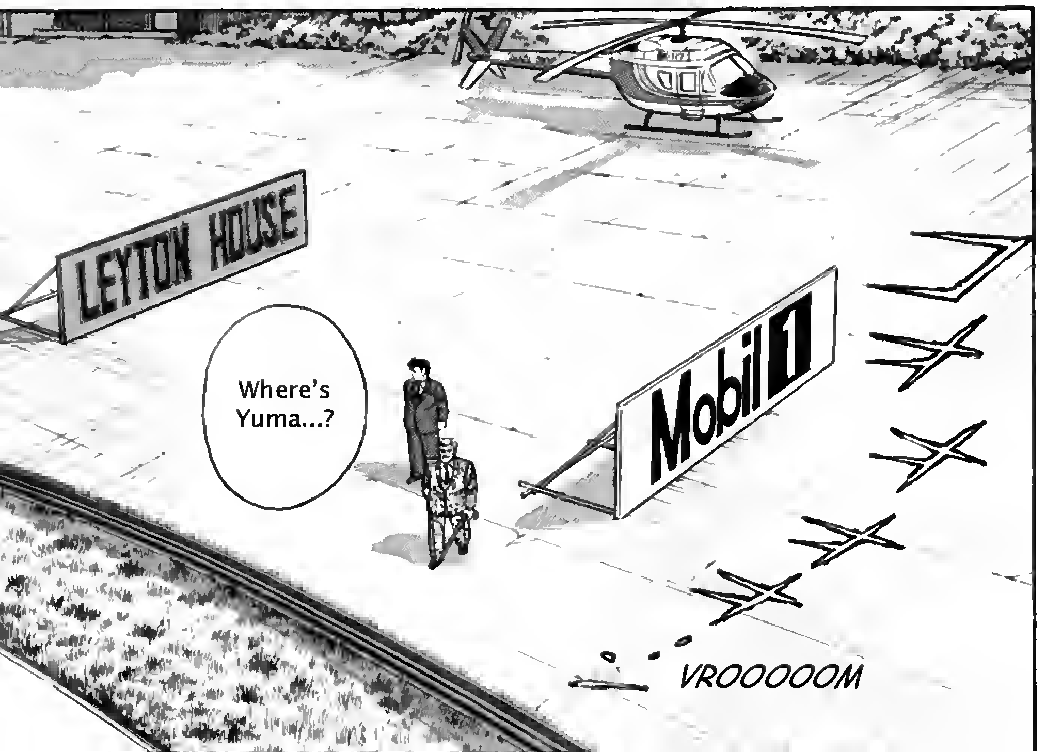
GROUP
BK-117
SWISH
SWISH
SWISH
SWISH
Dad's at Suzuka!?

He obviously just came to get you, Yuma! Just go!
What? I don't got nothin' to say to him!
Gunma ...
Wh-What'll you do, Gunma!?
Ha! No thank you!
It's been a while. Why don't you just say hello...?
!
W-Wait up, Gunma... About that thing I just asked...
Yeah, but...
Hey Tamotsu, let's get outta here. There's still some practice time left!

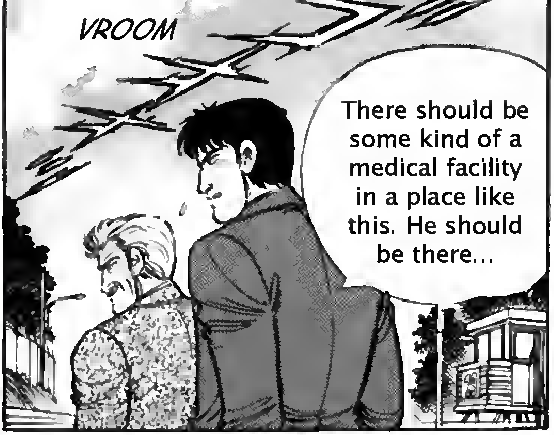
You'll collapse again, like you just did...
I'll be fine next time. I promise!
...
I told you already... You've got a weak heart...
I'm beg-ging ...
I want you to take me with to Macau... Please.
...
And even if something happens, I won't cause you any trouble...
Because ...
Why do you want to see me race...?
Isn't it obvious? I want to watch you race with my own eyes!
Hey, Yuma... Why do you want to go to Macau?
軍馬
G


...!
The same way you're trying to surpass dad...
I want to...
Probably because I want to surpass you.



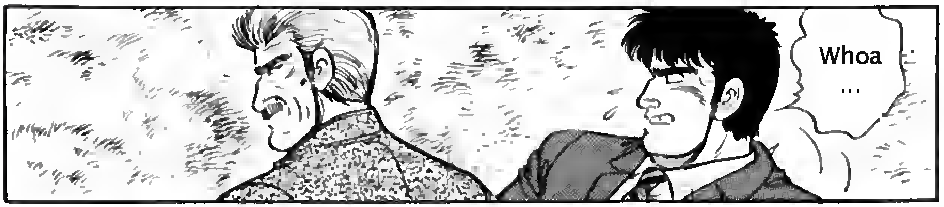

LEYTON HOUSE
Where's Yuma...?
Mobil 1
VROOOOOM

Hmph... This place sure is loud...


VROOM
There should be some kind of a medical facility in a place like this. He should be there...

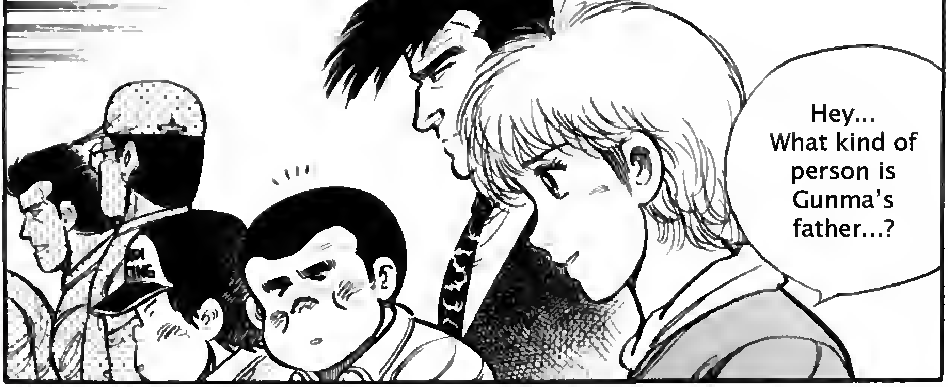
ZOOM
KSSHHH

This could cause problems even for healthy people.
...

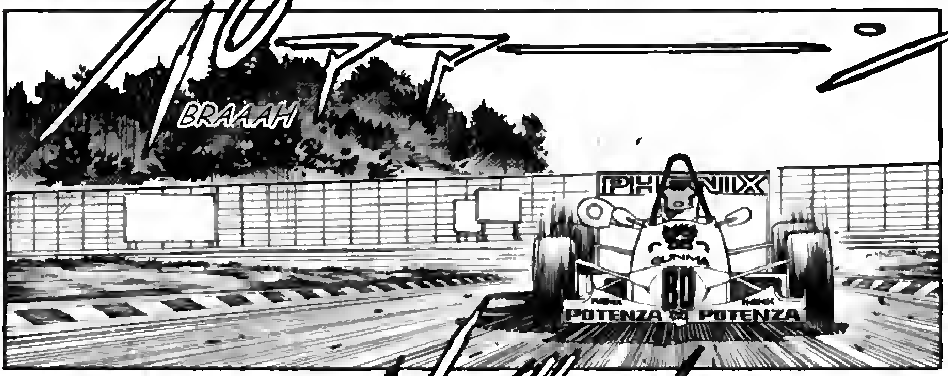

Whoa
...

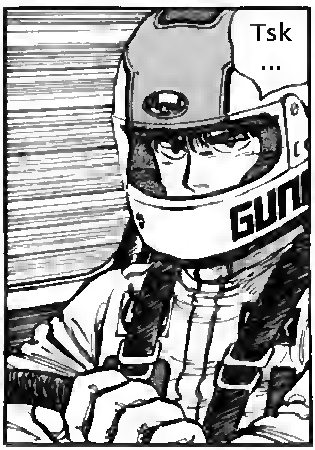
VOOOOOM
Phew
...

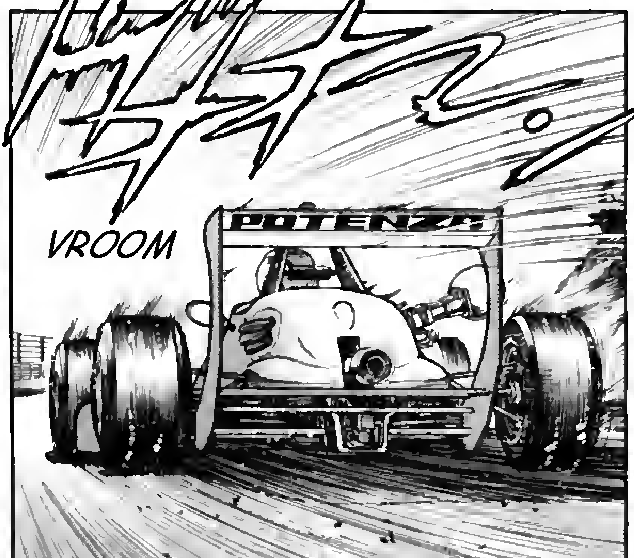
VROOM
POTENZA
Later!
SHOEI
RAC
Are you sure you're fine without seeing him, Gunma!?
I don't care!
MUGEN RACING TEAM
ZOOM
...
What happened?
...
Still, it's a heck of a surprise...
VROOM
ZOOOM
Wow.
He was disowned and left home...
Hell, I had no idea... I wouldn't have guessed that he was heir to the Akagi Group...
RACING
MUGEN RACING TEAM

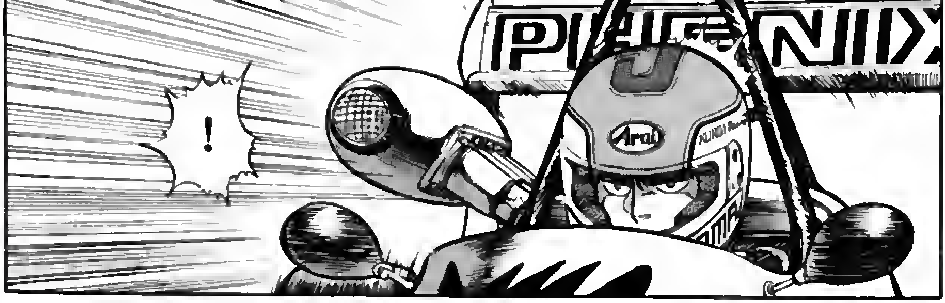

Hey... What kind of person is Gunma's father...?

He's just like Gunma...
...

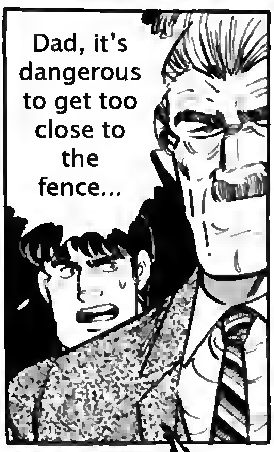

BRAAAH
PHOENIX
80
POTENZA
POTENZA


Tsk ...

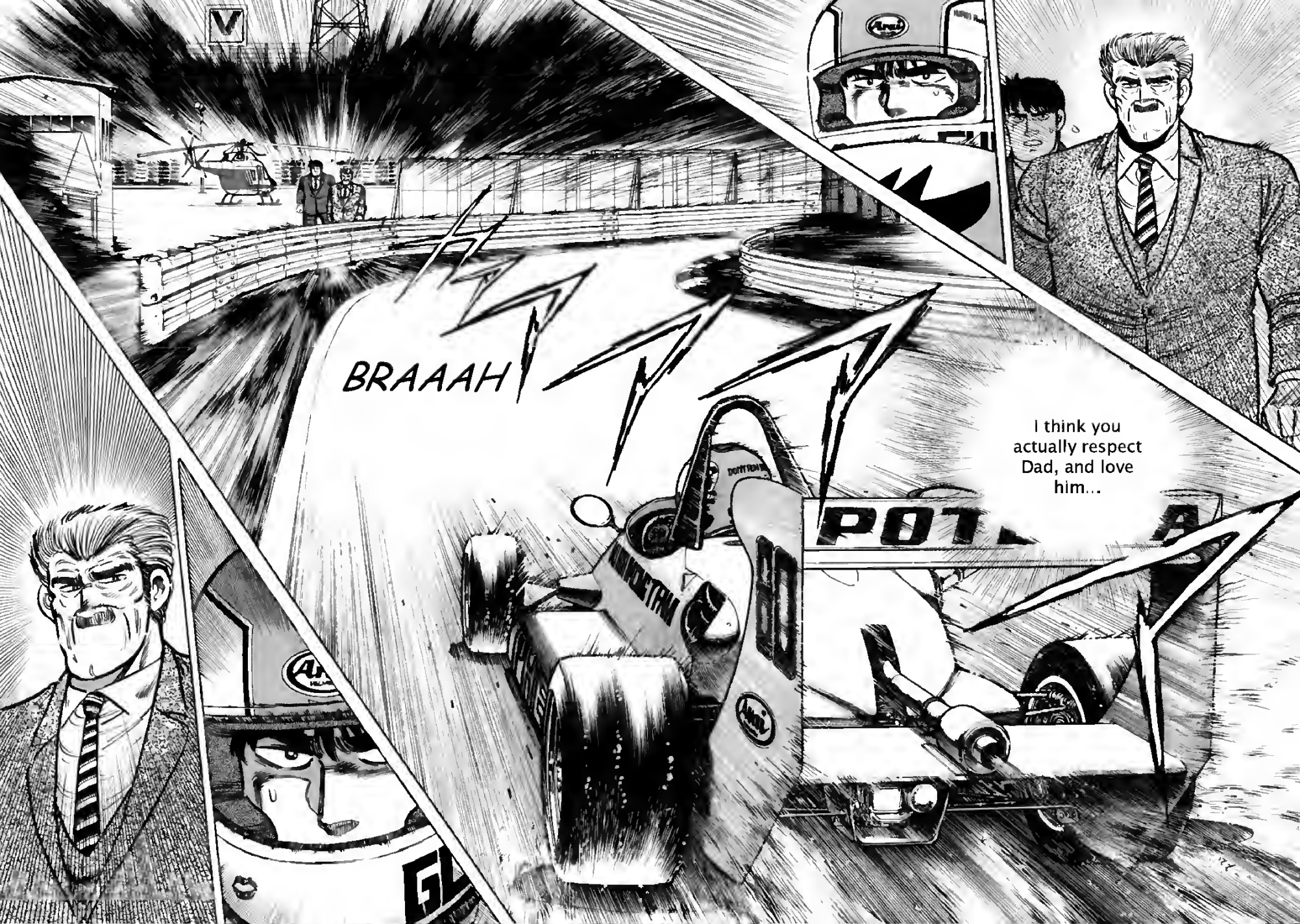

VROOM
POTENZA

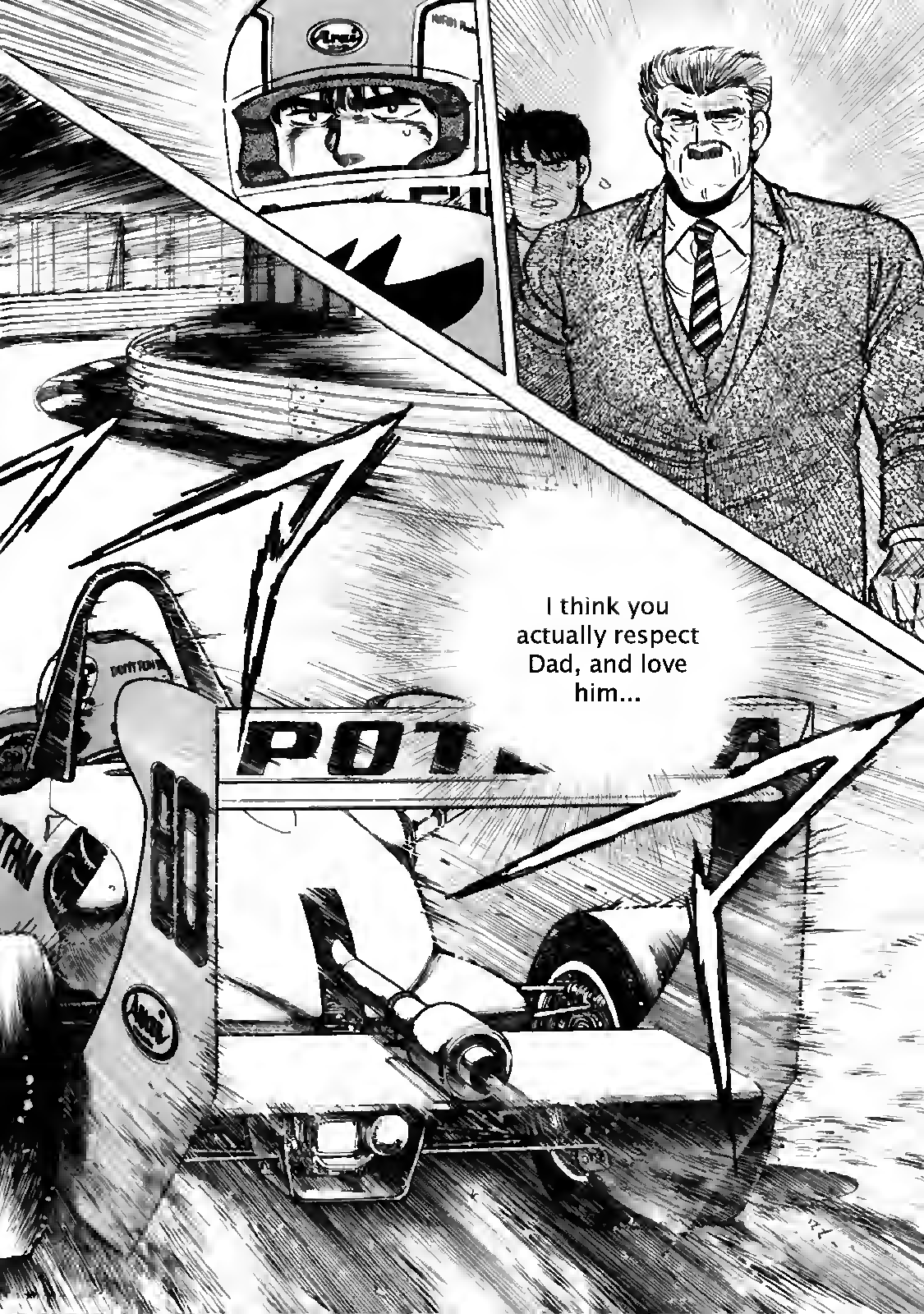

!

Arai


Dad, it's dangerous to get too close to the fence...

ZOOOOOM

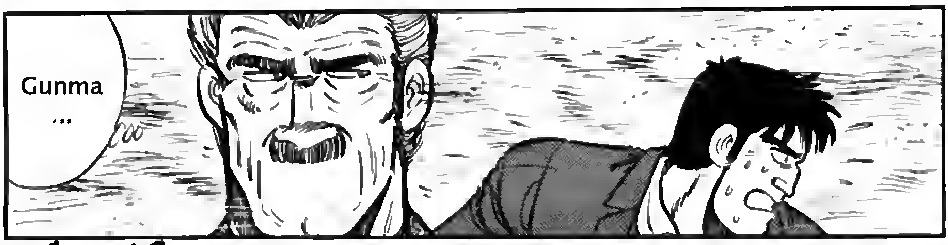

BRAAAH
I think you actually respect Dad, and love him...


I think you actually respect Dad, and love him...

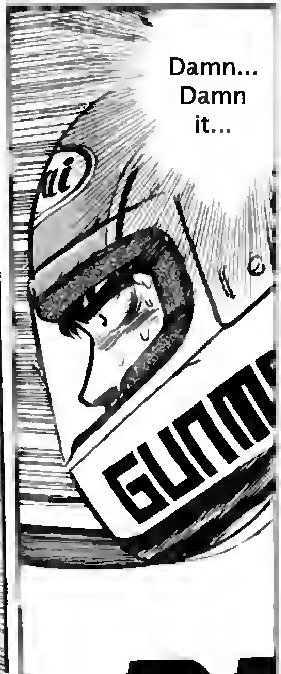
BRAAAH

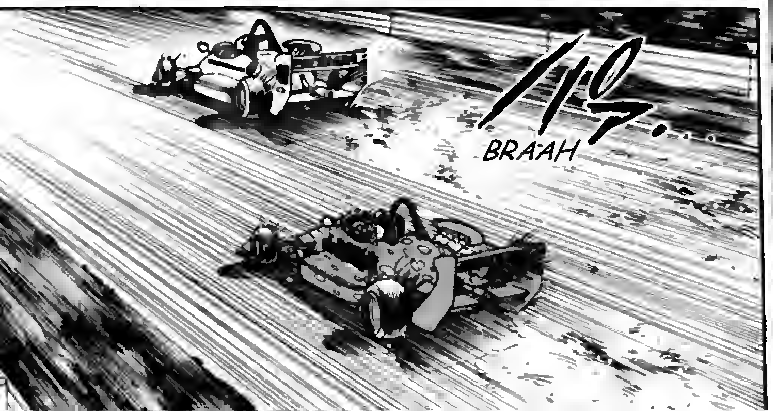
BRAAAH
PUSH
Arai
BRAAH
Ah!
Look out!
SCREETCH

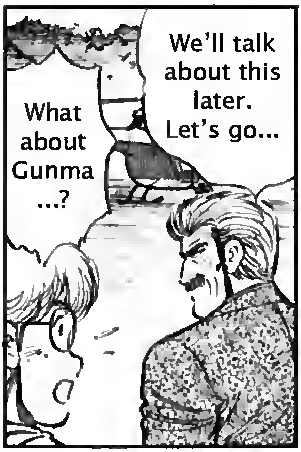
SCREEECH

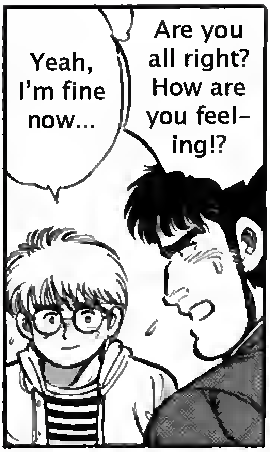

Gunma
...

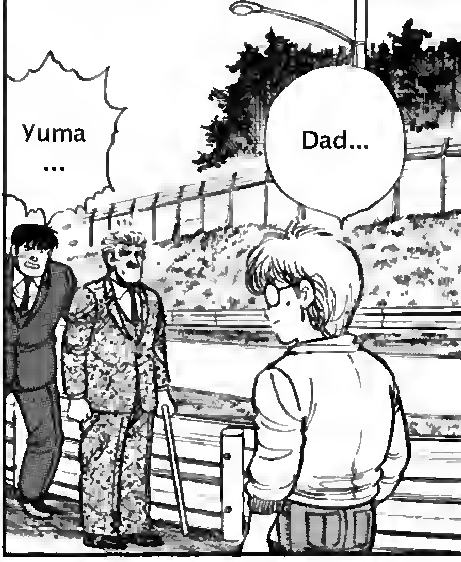
VROOM
Whoa
...

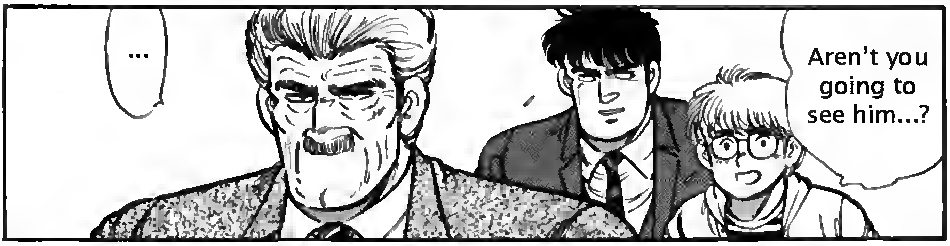

Damn...
Damn
it...


BRAAH

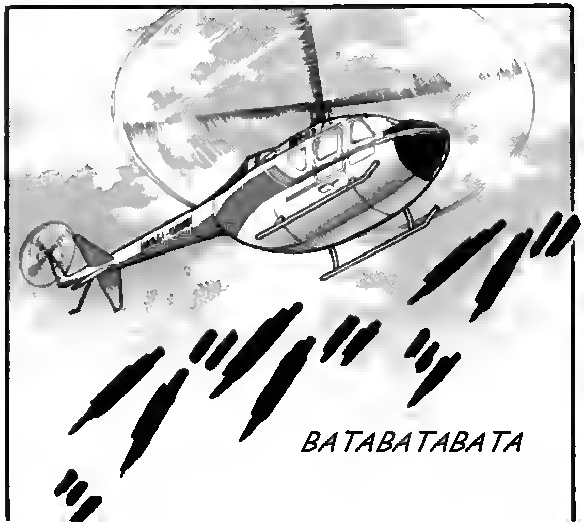

What about Gunma ...?
We'll talk about this later. Let's go...

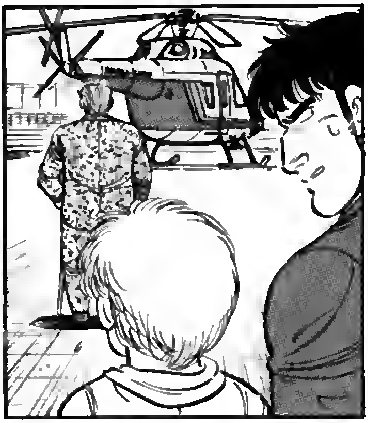

Yeah, I'm fine now...
Are you all right? How are you feeling!?


Yuma ...
Dad...


...
Aren't you going to see him...?

That won't be necessary...
No.

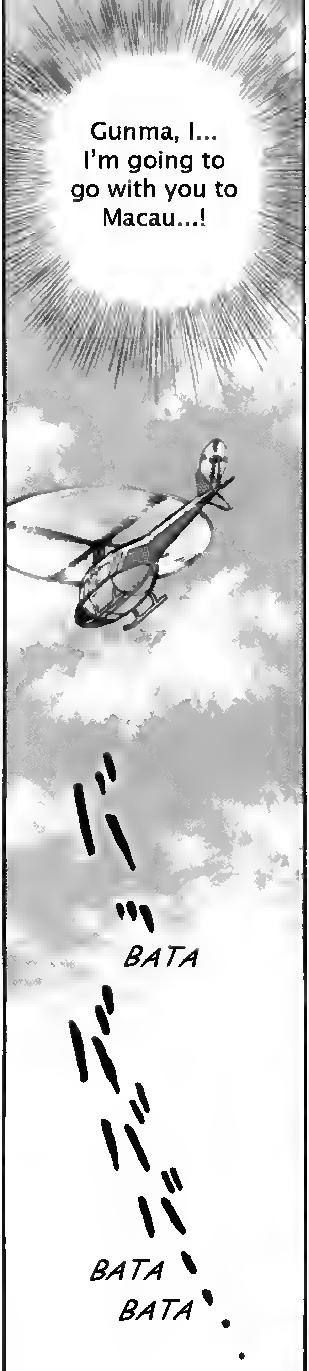

BATABATABATA



I'm not going to get better...
The only thing you have to worry about right now is getting better!
BATA
BATA
BATA
Still saying Gunma this, Gunma that...
He's not a member of the Akagi Family anymore! How many times do I have to tell you!?
Stop being so sentimental!
We live in totally opposite worlds!
BATTA
Just forget about him!
BATTA
BATTA
I wonder.
That's right!
Worlds that will never meet, no matter where they go?
Opposite worlds...
But in reality, the front ends up as the back, and the back the front. The front and back end up attached, and it's all the same field...
I don't think that's true... You just want to think it is.
What!?

Gunma, I... I'm going to go with you to Macau...!
BATA
BATA
BATA
It's like a Mobius strip...

It's like a Mobius strip...


Gunma, I... I'm going to go with you to Macau...!
BATA
BATA
BATA

F VOL.9

Author
ROKUDA NOBORU

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